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A VOICE FROM CHINA

A VOICE FROM CHINA

BY

GRIFFITH JOHN, D.D.

LONDON
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1907

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To

MY BELOVED DAUGHTER

MARY B. L. SPARHAM

WHO FOR MORE THAN TWENTY YEARS

HAS BEEN TO HER FATHER

A VERITABLE GUARDIAN ANGEL

THIS LITTLE BOOK

IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

PREFACE

Most of these addresses were delivered in China in the presence of missionaries and others; some, on the other hand, appear here for the first time, never having been orally delivered. The reader may regard them in their entirety as embodying the message that the author would have endeavoured to deliver, had he been permitted to visit his native land at this time. Having, by reason of illness, been debarred from this pleasure and privilege, it has seemed to him that some good might be accomplished by sending the addresses forth in this form. That they may be the means of deepening missionary interest and stimulating missionary zeal in the Churches is his most ardent prayer.

Griffith John.

Yonkers, New York, U.S.A.,
July, 1907.

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I

THEN AND NOW

"This work was wrought of our God."—NEHEMIAH VI. 16.

WE have just reached the close of the first hundred years of Protestant missions in China, and I wish to call attention to the contrast between the present and the past. If we compare the state of things to-day with the state of things existing in China in Dr. Morrison's day, we shall be able to some extent to realise how great is the work which has been wrought of God during this period in that great empire. We may also notice that the progress of Christian missions in China is but typical of the advance that has been made throughout the world in the same period.

When Dr. Morrison went to China the country was, both legally and practically, closed to the missionary and to the Gospel. In those days it was a crime for a Chinese to teach, or for a foreigner to learn, the language; it was a crime for a Chinese to print anything in his own language for a foreigner. No public preaching or teaching was tolerated in those days. To address an individual or two with fear and trembling, in an inner apartment, with the doors securely locked—that is the way Dr. Morrison was compelled to carry on his evangelistic work for many a long year. He accomplished a great work in translating the Bible into the Chinese language, and in compiling

his magnificent dictionary; but he found it impossible to go forth among the people, and openly proclaim the message of salvation. To him China was a sealed country, and his being allowed to remain in it at all is to be ascribed to his official connection with the East India Company. The other missionaries were compelled to settle among the Chinese scattered over the East Indian Archipelago. It was our first treaty with China, concluded at the city of Nanking, in the year 1842, that began to open China to the merchant and the missionary. I mention the missionary, not because he was thought of by the plenipotentiary, Sir Henry Pottinger, when framing that treaty; indeed, we know that the existence of the missionary was completely ignored on that occasion, and that nothing could have been further from the intention of the plenipotentiary than to widen the sphere of his activity. Some of the missionaries, in the innocence of their hearts, sent the plenipotentiary a letter, thanking him for the facilities which had been obtained under the treaty for the preaching of the Gospel in China. In reply they received a communication to the effect that nothing of such action as they intended was contemplated by the treaty, and that if they went to Shanghai he might find it necessary to put them on board ship and send them back to England. That was the first treaty ever entered into by the English Government with China, and it contains no reference whatever to either the missionary or his work. I mention the missionary then simply because, *in the providence of God*, it was that treaty that made it possible for him to establish himself in China, and because I discern in that event the finger of God, and a Divine purpose infinitely

transcending that of saturating China with opium or even the introduction of British manufactures.

At this time five ports were opened, and real missionary work began to be done *in* China. But though the missionary had a much wider scope for action after this event, and though his condition was that of freedom itself as compared with the state of bondage in which Dr. Morrison had been compelled to live and labour, he could not but feel that China was still a sealed country. No Protestant missionary had ever appeared within the walls of the capital as an ambassador for Christ, or trod the banks of the mighty Yangtsze. It was the Elgin Treaty, concluded at Tientsin in 1858 and coming into full operation in 1860, that opened China, and it is during the forty-seven years since that the missionary work in China has made any marked progress. That treaty did not only add nine new ports to the preceding five, it threw the whole country open so far as the right of travel is concerned. But to open the country *legally* was one thing, to open it *practically* was quite another thing. From the year 1860 to the year 1900, the work was carried on in spite of much opposition and very many trials. It was carried on in the midst of riots, massacres, and all sorts of outrages. The suppression of the Boxer movement, however, in 1900, made a deep impression on the Chinese mind, and wrought a complete change in the official attitude, and ever since that year China has been open *practically* as well as *legally*. Now I want my readers to realise what a great change has come over China in this respect. In the days of Dr. Morrison the missionary as such had absolutely no foothold in the country, and even when I arrived, in 1855, there were

only five spots in the whole of that great empire on which he might pitch his tent. The vast interior was hermetically closed against him, the length of his tether being only twenty-four hours from the treaty port. He might go whithersoever he pleased, but he must be back within twenty-four hours and report himself. How different the present state of things! The whole of China proper is legally and practically open to us, and so are Mongolia and Manchuria; and the missionary may now go and deliver his message in every province, and city, and town, and village of the land. Nay, he may do more. He may go and establish himself and his missionary institutions wheresoever he pleases. That is a great fact. There is not a fact in connection with China which fills my heart with profounder gratitude or deeper joy.

But it has been my privilege to witness not only the opening of the territory of a vast empire; it has been my privilege to witness a still more wonderful sight, namely, the opening of the mind of a great people. When Dr. Morrison went to China, China was fast asleep, and so it was when I went nearly fifty years later. There was no thirst for any lore outside the *lore of Cathay*. The Western man and Western knowledge were held in supreme contempt. The dead hand upon China in those days was her entire satisfaction with her own condition. Now China is not only waking up, but is actually awake, and stretching forth her hands in earnest appeal for the stores of knowledge which we possess, and to which we owe our greatness. You have heard how earnestly, and with what enthusiasm, the Chinese are going in for Western education. Even the old system of examination for literary degrees has been given up, and

hereafter degrees are to be obtained only by passing the public school examinations, which are conducted on Western lines and in Western subjects. Thus the last vestige of a system, which has been in vogue since the seventh century of our era, has been swept away. China's great educational scheme includes schools for female scholars as well as for male scholars, and one condition of admission is the unbinding of the feet. This is a new thing in China. Till now there have been no schools for girls in the empire. The edicts recently issued with regard to a national system of education, the granting of a constitution, the prohibition of opium and the suppression of foot binding are of momentous importance and full of promise. The rapid multiplication of newspapers, all discussing public subjects and all preaching reform, and the friendly attitude of many of the editors towards Christianity, are facts of great significance. The railway, the telegraph, the Imperial postal service, and other Western inventions and appliances have been invading the land of the hitherto sleeping giant, and the giant shows no displeasure. Not only is he not displeased with this new thing that has come upon him, he seems greatly to enjoy the change. The China of to-day is all alive, and going to school again, and she is doing so willingly, gladly, eagerly. What a magnificent opportunity does that great empire present to the Christian Church these days!

Mr. Robert Philip, in his life of Dr. Milne, published in 1840, says: "Could Mr. John Morrison (son of Dr. Morrison) only say that China proper was open, he might command the churches and pick the colleges of both Great Britain and America." Mr. John Morrison

was not able to say that in his day. But, thank God, am able to say that to-day; and the question now is, whether I have not the right, as one of Dr. Morrison's successors, to command the churches and pick the colleges of Great Britain. If I could only do that, my joy in the prospect of returning to China would be more than full, it would be overflowing.

And what I have said about China is true of the whole heathen world. About one hundred years ago, nearly the whole heathen world was closed to the Gospel and inaccessible to the missionary. To-day nearly all the barriers are down, and almost every tribe is accessible. This is a great fact to proclaim at the beginning of the second century of modern missions. I find it impossible to think of it without asking, with wonder and gratitude, "What hath God wrought?" Let the Church be loyal to her King and faithful to her glorious mission, let her seek a baptism of Divine power and begin to work with the energies of Christ—let her do this, and before the close of the second century the other and still greater facts will have been proclaimed. Great voices will have been heard in heaven saying, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ." That is one contrast. Let me give another.

When Dr. Morrison went to China, there was not a published Bible in China, neither was there a single book or tract in the language which the Protestant Church could claim as her own production. The Roman Catholic Church in China had not been altogether inactive in the work of translating the Scriptures into the Chinese language. There can be no doubt that the

New Testament had been translated by the Roman Catholic missionaries before the days of Dr. Morrison, and it is not impossible that the whole Bible had been translated by them also. Be that as it may, one thing is certain, namely, that no version of the Bible had ever been *printed* or *published* by them. Whatever translations existed, they were in manuscript, kept in private hands, and not placed at the service of the people. Up to the beginning of the last century, no version of the Scriptures in the Chinese language had been published; and thus it was left to the Protestant Church to have the honour—the unspeakable honour—of giving the Chinese people the Bible in their own language. And the great honour of producing the first version ever printed and published *in* China was left to the London Missionary Society.

The work of Bible translation in China has been carried on in the midst of many difficulties. In the early days it was specially so. Dr. Morrison, however, was the very man to attempt the difficult task. "The patience that refuses to be conquered, the diligence that never tires, and the caution that always trembles," were his in an eminent degree. No sooner did he arrive in China than he began to work on his translations. In six years his translation of the New Testament was completed, and in twelve years the translation of the whole Bible was finished. That was a marvellous achievement. But that is not all.

Simultaneously with this Biblical work, he carried on another piece of work of great value. Within eight years of his arrival in China, the first volume of his Anglo-Chinese dictionary was produced, and within

silenced, said: "I am silenced, but my books are not silenced. My books are in all the provinces, they are to be found everywhere, and they cannot be silenced." So can I say: "Though we, the missionaries, were silenced, our Scriptures and tracts could not be silenced. They are in all the provinces, they are to be found everywhere, and they cannot be silenced." That, to my mind, is a momentous fact.

But China does not stand alone in this respect. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Bible existed in some thirty languages only. It now exists in nearly 400 different languages and dialects. At that time the Word of God was unknown to the great heathen nations of the world. To-day there is hardly a tongue into which it has not been translated, and in which a precious Christian literature is not to be found. That is a wonderful contrast. Let me give yet another.

When Dr. Morrison went to China, there was not a single Protestant missionary in China. We all know that Robert Morrison was the first missionary ever sent out by the Protestant Church to that land. In 1813, Dr. Milne made an effort to join him, but in vain. He was driven out and compelled to settle in Malacca, where he spent the rest of his days. In 1829, Dr. Morrison was still alone. In 1830, his heart was cheered by the advent of two American missionaries, Bridgman and Abeel. In 1833, he was joined by two more missionaries from America. In 1834, the year in which Dr. Morrison died, there were, perhaps, four missionaries *in* China, and their efforts, such efforts as were possible in those days, were confined to the suburbs of Canton. Even in 1860, when the Elgin Treaty came into full operation,

there were only about 150 missionaries in all China, and they were all residing at the five treaty ports, the five centres at which foreigners were allowed to settle up to that date. Beyond these five ports lay the vast interior, unoccupied by a single Protestant missionary. Such was the state of things only forty-seven years ago. How different the present state of things! From the year 1860 till now, the missionary movement in China has been a grand forward movement. Since that date the missionaries have been pouring into China, and taking possession of one province after another in rapid succession, and that in spite of many obstacles and much opposition. All the provinces are now occupied by them. They are in possession of all the provincial capitals, and are carrying on a permanent work at nearly all the largest and most important centres of population in every province. There is hardly a strategic point in all these provinces that is not held by the missionary. We have in China at present nearly 4,000 foreign missionaries, including wives. And among the wives are to be found some of the best missionaries the Societies can boast of.

Now, I want my readers to think of these thousands of missionaries, not as huddling together at and around the treaty ports, but as occupying advanced posts in all the interior, and carrying on their glorious work with wonderful freedom and marked success. And I want you to think of them also as supported by an army of about 10,000 native helpers, as pastors, evangelists, colporteurs, hospital assistants, and teachers of schools. Among these native helpers are to be found men of great ability, earnest consecration, and real worth. The success of the work in recent years is largely to be

ascribed to the growth and efficiency of the native staff of workers. There is much work which they alone can do; and there is much work which they can do much better than the foreign missionary. Such is the present state of things as compared with that of the past, and I cannot think of the contrast without thanking God for the great things which He has done.

It must be borne in mind that the interior of China is occupied, not by one mission only, but by all the missions. The honour of carrying the Gospel into the inland cities, towns, and villages of China does not belong to any one mission exclusively, though it must be admitted that the China Inland Mission has taken a leading part in this enterprise. All the missions can claim a share in this glorious work. Let me give an illustration of what I mean. In the year 1868, I made a long pioneering journey in the provinces of Hupeh, Sze-Chwan, and Shensi, accompanied by my friend, the late Mr. Wylie, of the British and Foreign Bible Society. We ascended the Yangtsze as far as Sü-Chow-fu, a city distant from the sea about 1,700 miles. We then ascended the Min, a tributary of the Yangtsze, as far as Cheng-tu, the capital of Sze-Chwan. Then we tramped Sze-Chwan, and made for the river Han. At Han-Chung-fu, a city distant from Hankow about 1,200 miles, we took boat again, and came down to Hankow by the Han. It was a journey of more than 3,000 miles, and it took us more than five months to complete it. We preached and sold books at almost every city and town on the line of our march. But the facts to which I wish to call attention are these: First, from the day we left Hankow to the day we returned to

it, we never came across a single Protestant missionary, or a single Protestant convert. In those days Hankow was the furthest inland station in the Yangtsze valley. Second, there are now, on the same route and on the line of our march, a large number of mission stations, all manned by foreign missionaries; and on the right and on the left of that line, in the same provinces, there are many more stations similarly manned. Third, the missionaries manning these stations represent from ten to twenty different societies, and some seven or eight distinct denominations. There they are — Baptists, Congregationalists, Methodists, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Friends, Lutherans—all working together in perfect harmony, and all animated by the one noble purpose of making known Christ and His great salvation to the millions of that region. But I have only touched on a piece of China. Other parts are similarly occupied, and the work is moving on bravely in many parts. That to my mind is a magnificent spectacle, and all brought to pass in less than fifty years.

But we cannot rest satisfied with this result. Though the missionaries have taken possession of every province, they have not taken possession of *all* the counties into which the provinces are sub-divided. There are still some hundreds, probably no less than a thousand, of these counties without a single missionary station. Our ambition now is to capture all the counties, and to cover the whole land with our chapels, hospitals, and schools. Let the churches do their duty, and it may be safely promised that before the close of the next fifty years this great hope will have been realised. But we must have more workers. Instead of 4,000 missionaries we shall want

10,000, at least, and instead of 10,000 native helpers we shall want 100,000. One of the greatest needs of our London Missionary Society in China to-day is the doubling of its staff of workers. And the same thing might be said of almost every other Society.

Let me give still another contrast. When Dr. Morrison went to China there was not a single Protestant convert in China. It took Dr. Morrison seven years to make his first convert, and this convert had to be taken to a "spring of water issuing from the foot of a lofty hill by the seaside, away from all human observation, in order to be baptized." When Dr. Morrison died, in 1834, at the close of a laborious career of twenty-seven years, he could not boast of ten converts. In 1855, the year in which I arrived in China, there may have been 500 converts, and they were all living at and around the five treaty ports. But look at the progress since the earlier days, and notice the rate of progress of late. In 1842, there were in all China six church members; in 1855, there were about 500; in 1865, there were about 2,000; in 1875, there were about 13,000; in 1885, there were about 28,000; in 1890, there were about 38,000; in 1899, there were about 113,000; and now there are more than 180,000, representing a Christian community of about 500,000 souls. It took the first thirty-five years to build up a church of six members, forty-eight years to build up a church of 500 members, fifty-three years to build up a church of 1,000 members, and eighty years to build up a church of 40,000 members. But look at the progress in the first decade of the twentieth century. Since the year 1900 there have been added to our church roll more than

50,000 converts. That is, these six or seven years have given us more church members than the first eighty years gave us. Let the same rate of increase continue, and we shall have some millions of converts before the close of the next fifty years. Ever since the year 1860, our prospects have been growing brighter and brighter as the years and the decades have been passing by. In spite of riots, persecutions, and opposition of every kind, there has been a steady advance, and never have our prospects been brighter than they are now, never so bright.

But you may say, "One hundred and eighty thousand church members! What are they as against four hundred millions of heathen?" True, very true. But there is another way of looking at the matter. Compare the present with the past and see how matters stand. We commenced our first century in China with absolutely nothing. We commenced it without a single convert and without a single native helper. We are commencing our second century with more than 180,000 church members, representing a Christian community of about 500,000 souls, and with an army of about 10,000 picked men and women closely associated with us in Christian work. We commenced the first century without a translation of the Bible and without a single Christian book or tract. We commence the second century with excellent translations of the Scriptures and with an extensive Christian literature. We commenced the first century with a closed country and with a people whose minds were absolutely closed to our message. We commence the second century with a country open from end to end, and with a people whose minds are wide

awake and eager to learn. And then I want you to think of those tens of thousands of Christians, not as living at and around a few treaty ports, but as scattered over the face of the land, and therefore as so many lights burning and shining in dark places. In the early days it was a phenomenon to meet a Protestant convert anywhere outside the treaty ports. They are now to be seen in all the provinces, and not in the cities and towns only, but even in the villages and open country.

I have spoken of converts; but besides the converts there are many around the various mission stations who are standing somewhere between the two kingdoms. There are many who are thoroughly convinced of the truth of Christianity and the folly of idolatry, though they have not joined the Christian Church. Moreover, as the result of the daily preaching at the chapels, of extensive itinerancy in the interior, and of the widespread dissemination of Christian literature, a limited knowledge of Christian truth is becoming very common over the land. In the early days it was a rare thing to meet anyone outside the treaty ports who knew anything about our teachings. To-day such persons are to be met with everywhere. The air of China is being filled with the music of the Cross, and the minds of the people are being saturated with the story of Jesus. The Divine seed has been widely sown, and everywhere it is springing up and bearing fruit. A rich harvest is awaiting us, which we shall reap with joyful hearts in the days to come, *if* we faint not.

And what is going on in China is going on the world all over. In Africa, in India, in Japan, and in almost

every land under the sun this great work is going on. The Gospel has found its way into every land, or almost every land, and everywhere it is proving itself to be the power of God unto the salvation of men.

In the year 1760, in a room in Geneva, Voltaire boastingly said, "Before the *beginning* of the nineteenth century, Christianity will have disappeared from the earth." Well, the nineteenth century has come and gone. But what do we see to-day? A world in which Christianity is dead and the name of its Founder forgotten? A world without a church, without a chapel, without a pulpit, without a pew? A world without a Bible, without a colporteur, without a missionary, without a convert? No! Emphatically no! On the contrary, we see a world in which Christ reigns with unrivalled power; a world in which Christianity is gradually, but surely, triumphing over every system of error; a world into whose every tongue, or nearly every tongue, the word of God has been translated; a world actually covered with Christian missions and rapidly becoming filled with the knowledge of the Lord. Why, the very room in which that vain prediction was uttered has been used as a Bible depository. Voltaire said that he was living in the twilight of Christianity, and so he was; but, as it has been well said by another, it was the twilight of the morning.

So much for the contrast between the present and the past. To my mind the contrast is something wonderful.

The progress of Christ's kingdom during the past one hundred years has been simply marvellous. In no equal period of her history has the Christian Church won triumphs so great, so wide, and so glorious.

"This work was wrought of our God." Of that there can be no doubt whatever.

And now there are two questions which I should like to answer. They are questions which have been often asked, and especially of late. The first question is this: Are the missionaries *specially* hated by the masses of the Chinese people, and are the anti-foreign riots in China to be ascribed to this hatred? Lord Curzon, in his "Problems of the Far East," says: "The Chinese, who dislike all foreigners, regard the missionaries in particular with intense aversion." If that were true, the missionary outlook in China would be dark indeed. But is it true? I say it is *not* true. It is not true that the missionaries in *particular* are regarded by the Chinese with intense aversion. On the contrary, the missionaries (I am speaking of the Protestant missionaries) are held in better esteem by the Chinese as a people than any other class of foreigners. The masses of the people do not hate the missionary as such, and the longer he lives among them, the more friendly do they become. I have travelled, more or less, over nine provinces, and extensively over the provinces of Hupeh and Hunan, and I find that the people of these two provinces, instead of becoming less friendly as the years roll on, are becoming more and more friendly every day. And such has been the experience of the Protestant missionaries generally in all the provinces occupied by them. And there is every reason why it should be so. The missionaries are emphatically the friends of the people, and the people are becoming more and more convinced of the fact. The missionaries are more than religious teachers; they are the benefactors of the people in every sense of the term.

The poor are taught in their schools, the sick are healed in their hospitals, and the helpless are helped by them in manifold ways. They are earnest, hard-working men, who are trying in every possible way to promote the physical, intellectual, and moral well-being of the people. Moreover, in the missionaries the Chinese have the true representatives of the intellectual, moral, and spiritual culture of the West, and many of them know it. You often hear them speak of missionary So-and-so as a "holy man," of another as a "divine man," of another as a "living Buddha." "If Pastor So-and-so," they will sometimes say, "were a Chinaman, we should rank him among the holy men and sages."

As to the riots, they are to be ascribed, not to a deep hatred of the missionary among the masses of the Chinese people, but to the anti-foreign spirit and policy of the governing classes. Such emphatically was the case in former days. The riots could always be traced to an influence from above. Where the officials were friendly, the people were quiet; where the officials were inimical, the people were turbulent. Everything in China depends on the official attitude. Let that become sincerely friendly, and I am glad to say that it is now becoming more and more so every day, and it may be safely predicted that all these riots, call them anti-missionary or anti-foreign, will soon become things of the past.

But if the movement represented by the riots is not in its deepest meaning anti-missionary, if it is first and above all an anti-foreign movement, why is it that the missionaries, and not the merchants, are almost invariably the victims of these riots? The answer to this question is simple enough. They are so because, as the true pioneers

of civilisation, they are the most exposed to attack. Had the merchants been occupying those advanced posts in the interior, they would have been attacked in a similar manner, and would not have fared better. Do not forget 1900 and the siege of the Legations, as well as the missions, in Peking in that terrible year. The Boxer movement was emphatically an *anti-foreign* movement, and not specially *anti-missionary*. So much for the first question. There is no truth in the statement that the missionaries are regarded by the Chinese with *special* aversion, and there is no truth whatever in the statement that the riots in China are to be ascribed to this cause.

The second question is this: Are there any genuine Christians in China? There are men in England who will tell you that they have been to China, and that they have found *no* converts there. I will not trouble you with any remarks about them just now. I have already stated that there are in China to-day more than 180,000 church members, representing a Christian community of about half a million souls. That is a fact anyhow.

There are others who will tell you that there are converts, but that they are all false—that there is not a genuine Christian among them. And I have read a statement to the effect that those who say that the missionaries are making *real* converts in China are subject to a delusion or are guilty of a fraud. Well, I have been to China too, and I have seen something of the converts, and I am prepared to make this statement distinctly and emphatically; and you must judge for yourselves as to the man who should be regarded as an authority on this subject—a missionary who has laboured

for China for more than fifty years, and who is prepared to lay down his life at any moment for the good of the Chinese people, or a mere globe-trotter, who *knows* nothing about the work, who *cares* nothing about the work, and whose *conclusions* touching the work are based upon nothing more substantial than the silly tittle-tattle about missions and missionaries that abounds in every foreign settlement at which he may call. Would that these men knew half as much about Christ and His great salvation as some of the Chinese Christians know! Being unconverted themselves, how can they believe in the conversion of the Chinese? Do they believe in the conversion of anyone? Do they believe in conversion at all?

I do not mean to say that *all* our converts are genuine, neither do I mean to say that all who are genuine are all that we could wish them to be; but I do mean to say that we have thousands of genuinely converted men and women in China, and that the number of such is increasing every day. I do not see how any honest-minded man could say that all our converts in China are false, after the splendid proofs of their sincerity which so many of them gave in 1900, in connection with the Boxer movement. In that year thousands upon thousands suffered the loss of all things rather than deny the Faith, and thousands suffered death in its most cruel forms rather than deny the Lord that bought them. Some of them were beheaded, some of them were speared, some of them were hacked to pieces, and some of them were burned at the stake. Some of them might have saved their lives had they been willing to prostrate themselves before the idols, and declare that

they would have nothing more to do with Christianity. But they chose death, committed their souls to Jesus, and faced the sword and the flames singing the praises of God. As the result of the trial, we have in China to-day a purer, a stronger, and a nobler church than we ever had before. We have a church of which we *may* well be proud, and of which we *are* proud.

Will you have another proof of the reality of the missionary work in China? Then think for a moment how the missionary's cry is becoming the cry of China these days. Down with opium, down with foot-binding, down with the degradation of women, down with ignorance, and down with idolatry and superstition of every kind. That has been the missionary's cry for many a long year—a voice crying in the wilderness. But see how the Chinese themselves are taking up the same cry these days, and giving effect to it! Why, the whole face of the Chinese nation is being changed by the missionary and his teachings!

It is not a matter of experiment with us now as to whether the Gospel can or cannot influence the Chinese mind. It is influencing it, and doing precisely the same thing for them that it is doing for you and me. It gives them the victory over sin and death: it enables them to say that old things have passed away, and that all things have become new; it makes them feel that to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. I have seen the Gospel work miracles in China. I have seen it make the lying truthful, the dishonest honest, the earthly and sensual heaven-aspiring and God-loving. I have seen it strike off the fetters that had bound the opium smoker for years and set the captive

free. I have seen it so change the heart of the gambler as to make him exclaim in gladsome surprise, "Why, the very taste for gambling is gone." I have seen it take Confucius down from his lofty pedestal, and convert the proud Confucianist into a humble disciple of the lowly Nazarene. The experiment has been made in China, and there, as here, Jesus Christ is proving Himself to be the Son of God and the Saviour of men.

And what is it that we want now? We want a grand forward movement, and that, not in connection with our own London Missionary Society only, but in connection with all the societies; not in one hemisphere only, but in both hemispheres; and not on behalf of China only, but on behalf of the whole heathen world. We want a movement that shall be worthy of the age in which we live, worthy of ourselves as redeemed men and women; and, above all, worthy of the Christ who has redeemed us. We want a movement that shall turn the 840 black squares on your missionary diagrams, each representing a million souls, into white before the close of this century. Do you ask me if I believe such a movement possible? Possible! Why should it not be possible? With God all things are possible, and to him that believeth all things are possible. Nay, I believe more. I believe that it rests with ourselves entirely as to whether we shall have such a movement or not. God has devolved on His Church the gigantic task of evangelising the nations, and He is ever waiting to clothe His people with the necessary power for its accomplishment. God *is* able, and He is willing to make us able. Let the churches take up the missionary work as their own work, let them read about it, and

think about it, and pray about it, till the missionary fire descends upon them—let them do this, and a great revival of religion among yourselves will follow, and a forward movement such as I have referred to will become inevitable. It will come with a rush, and you will not be able to stop it. Your hearts will go out in intense longings for the salvation of men, and you will never rest till the Christ shall see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied.

If there is any society in the world that ought to take the *lead* in such a movement, surely that society is the London Missionary Society. I address myself especially to the friends and supporters of that society. Have you any idea of the honour which God has bestowed upon you? Well, think of it. You were the first in China, the first in Polynesia, the first in Madagascar, and, with the Moravian Brethren, the first in South Africa. Speaking of China, you were the first to take possession of Canton in the south, the first to take possession of Peking in the north, the first to take possession of Shanghai in the east, the first to take possession of Hankow in the centre, and, though not the first to take possession of Sze-Chwan in the west, you were the very first to preach the Gospel in the streets of its famous cities. The first Protestant missionary ever sent to China was sent by you, the first Protestant church ever planted in China was planted by you, the first martyr ever given to the Protestant cause in China was given by you, and the first Bible ever printed and published *in* China was translated by you. You are now occupying some of the most important centres in that vast empire, and everywhere the work of the Lord is prospering in

your hands. Your interest in China is unique, and it is so in Africa, in Madagascar, and in the grand ocean world of the South Sea Islands. Let the watchword of other societies be what it may, there can be no doubt as to what *your* watchword should be. Your watchword must be, Forward! Ever Forward! *You* dare not turn back. You *cannot* stand still.

Bear with me whilst I make one more remark. You ought not to have allowed your Forward Movement to die down; and you are bound to take it up again, and make it a glorious success. I am not speaking to the Mission House; I am speaking to the churches. When Henry Martyn was drawing near Madras he said: "I am going on a work exactly according to the mind of Christ." So he was, and he never turned back. With regard to your Forward Movement, I can say: "You were going on a work exactly according to the mind of Christ, and you ought not to have turned back."

Dear friends, you must consecrate yourselves to this great and holy work. The cry from the heathen world, and especially from China, is louder than ever. The opportunities opened up before us in China and other lands are greater than ever; the need of a grand forward movement was never more pressing than it is to-day. To speak in the language of another: "The time is come for the full mobilisation of the army of the Cross. The time is come for the universal recognition of the fact that the chief end for which the Church ought to exist, and for which the individual members ought to live, is the evangelisation of the world." This is Christ's world, and He wants the whole of it. This is Christ's work, and He wants you to make it your own. These

840 millions of heathen are very precious to the heart of Christ, and He wants you to *help* Him to save them. He cannot save them without your help. I say it with profoundest reverence: *He cannot save them without your help*. He wants your money—the silver and the gold as well as the copper. He wants your best and ablest men—the very pick of your churches, colleges, and universities. He wants the deepest sympathy and heartiest co-operation of every one of you. Let not the pastors of our churches imagine that any sort of man will do for a missionary, and deem it a pity or a misfortune when a man of real worth offers himself for the mission field. Let not the tutors and professors of our colleges and universities frown when they see the missionary fire descend upon the most brilliant and the most promising of their students. And let none of you say that the missionary work is the work of the missionaries and not yours. It is the work of the missionaries, of course; but it is your work also, and it is as truly yours as it is theirs.

You may not be able to go forth as missionaries yourselves; but you are bound, as disciples of Jesus Christ, to send out others, and your very best; and when they are gone, to follow them with your loving sympathy and heartfelt prayers. This is a great spiritual work, and you must identify yourselves with it and infuse your spiritual life into it, if you would see it triumphant.

The missionaries have carried the flag in advance of the churches; and there are some among you who would have them bring it back. But this, God helping us, we will never do. Will *you* not come up to the flag? Will *you* not come to the help of the Lord against the mighty? We are soldiers of God, pledged to the extermination of

all idolatry and all sin wherever existing. Our aim is the dethronement of Satan in every land, and the restoration of the whole world to God. Our cry is, *The whole world for Christ.* Will you not join us in this glorious crusade? Will you not take a part in this holy war? Will you not identify yourselves with your Lord in this great enterprise?

> "He is sending forth a trumpet
> That shall never call retreat;
> He is sifting out the hearts of men
> Before His judgment seat.
> Be swift, my soul, to answer Him,
> Be jubilant, my feet,
> For God is marching on."

God is marching on! Marching on in China, marching on in Japan, marching on in India, marching on in Africa, marching on in every land. Do you not see Him? Do you not hear His voice calling you? As true soldiers of God, let us put on our armour, let us obey the Divine call, let us follow our Divine Leader, and let us conquer the world for Him who loved us and gave Himself for us.

II

THE SUPREME MOTIVE IN CHRISTIAN MISSIONS

"And Jesus came to them and spake unto them, saying, All authority hath been given unto Me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore and make disciples of all the nations . . . . and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."—MATTHEW XXVIII. 18—20.

"For the love of Christ constraineth us."—2 CORINTHIANS V. 14.

I WISH to invite attention to a few remarks on the supreme motive in Christian missions. Why should men devote their lives to this work? Why should men be asked to give their silver and gold in order to carry on this enterprise? What is the grand argument that should be used in our attempts to move the churches to greater activity, and the missionaries to deeper consecration in this holy cause? Where should the *emphasis* be placed in our advocacy of the missionary enterprise?

Shall we place the emphasis on the relation of the missionary enterprise to the advancement of secular knowledge? I have heard appeals made for missions on this ground, and there can be no doubt of the value of missions in this respect. It would be impossible to say how much the various departments of secular knowledge owe to foreign missions. Take geography, ethnology, philology and kindred subjects. Much of the

best and most reliable information we possess on these subjects has come to us through the missionaries. And it would be impossible to say how much the heathen nations of the world are indebted to the missionaries for any knowledge they possess on these subjects. Now this is a good thing in itself, and we cannot but rejoice in the fact that foreign missions have done so much by way of enlarging the sphere of human knowledge. But we dare not put the emphasis on this fact in our advocacy of missions. An individual here and there, or a learned society here and there, might be touched by an appeal made on this ground; but it would kindle no enthusiasm in the hearts of men generally. Men will not become missionaries, neither will the churches give of their wealth, for the mere purpose of promoting the growth of secular knowledge.

Shall we place the emphasis on the relation of the missionary enterprise to the advancement of commerce? I have heard appeals made on this ground, and there can be no doubt of the utility of missions in this respect. The mission is the friend of legitimate commerce always and everywhere. Whilst it sets its face like flint against trade in opium, fire-water and all such abominations, it joyfully welcomes the honest and honourable trader and prepares the way for him. The missionary is a pioneer of trade and commerce. He is the promoter of civilisation, learning and education wherever he may be, and these breed new wants which commerce supplies. Look at Africa, Polynesia, Madagascar and other countries, and see what kind of service the missionary can and does render to commerce. This is a fact to which attention should be called, and on which

an emphasis should be placed. But we dare not put *the* emphasis on this fact. Men will not become missionaries in order to advance the interests of commerce, neither will the churches give of their wealth for this purpose.

Shall we place the emphasis on the relation of the missionary enterprise to the advancement of civilisation? This is an important consideration. I have heard appeals made on this ground, and I have heard of men subscribing to missions because of their utility in this respect. Even Darwin became a subscriber by reason of what he saw with his own eyes of the civilising effects of missions. I have heard also of men refusing to subscribe to missions in China on the ground that the Chinese were supposed to be a highly civilised people. That the missionary enterprise is a great civilising agency is a fact that cannot be questioned. Look at the South Seas. There you see the wild cannibal turned into a lamb, the ferocious savage sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind, and the debased brutish pagan transformed into a heaven-aspiring and God-loving man. That is not religion only, but civilisation also. Speaking of the great change which had been wrought in the moral and social life of the natives of Tahiti and New Zealand, Darwin writes: "In a voyager to forget these things is base ingratitude, for should he chance to be at the point of shipwreck on some unknown coast he will most devoutly pray that the lesson of the missionary may have extended so far." Look at India. In India self-immolation, human sacrifices, the burning of widows, and other cruel practices have been swept away, and this is to be ascribed in a

great measure to the influence of the modern mission. Speaking of the missionaries in India, Lord Lawrence said: "However many benefits the English people have conferred on India, the missionaries have accomplished more than all other influences combined." Now there is nothing in the history of the world, we are told, that can compare with England's secular work in India during the past one hundred years or so, and yet Lord Lawrence, one of India's greatest viceroys, did not hesitate to speak of the work of the missionaries in India as surpassing all other in point of importance.

Look at Japan. It was in 1854 that the first treaty was concluded between Japan and any Western Power. Since then the Land of the Rising Sun has been steadily moving towards the civilisation of the West, and becoming more and more assimilated to Christian nations, and this is to be ascribed in a very great measure to the influence of modern missions. The progress of Japan in Christian civilisation received a wonderful illustration in her struggle with China in 1894-5, and again in 1900, in connection with the Boxer uprising. But it was in her conflict with Russia in 1904-5 that Japan gave the most conspicuous proof of the reality as well as the greatness of the progress made by her during these forty or fifty years. I do not refer to her material improvements as demonstrated by the wonderful strength and efficiency of her army and navy, though that must be admitted to be one of the great marvels of the age. What astonishes me most is the wonderful moral progress brought to light by these conflicts. Her well-equipped commissariat and thoroughly efficient medical department; the careful provision made, not only for her

own sick and wounded, but for the sick and wounded of the enemy also; her Red Cross Society, and her humane treatment of the prisoners taken in battle—all these things are new in Japan, and they are the things which fill the hearts of all Christian workers in the Far East with wonder and gratitude. When, 300 years ago, the armies of Japan swept over Korea, the spirit of plunder and carnage was unrestrained. The ears of 3,000 victims, slaughtered in a single battle, were brought back to Japan and exhibited as trophies of the cruel conflict. And the same spirit would have prevailed still but for the influence of Christianity. I do not mean to say that the Japanese as a people have adopted Christianity as a religion. That, as yet, they have not done; and I do not mean to say that they are likely to do so either to-day or to-morrow. It is impossible to foresee what religious developments may take place in Japan in the near future. But the Japanese have come into vital contact with Christian nations; they have come under the influence of Christian teaching; the spirit of Christianity is moving them; Christian ideas are taking possession of them; and they are putting on Christian civilisation with a rapidity and a thoroughness which astonish the world; and this is to be ascribed, in a very great measure, to the influence of Christian missions.

I might proceed to show that the same thing is true of the present awakening in China. But that I must not attempt at this point.

It is getting to be seen more and more clearly every day that among the civilising forces of the world, Christianity is the most powerful, and that the Christian missionary, instead of being an enemy, is a true friend

of commerce, of science, of education, and of civilisation. And this is a fact on which *due* emphasis should be placed. Still the *main* emphasis cannot be placed on this fact.

Shall we place the emphasis on the moral and spiritual condition of the heathen? This is a consideration of vital and momentous importance, and no missionary, and no thoughtful man or woman who professes to be a disciple of Jesus Christ, can fail to be influenced by it. The moral and spiritual condition of the heathen world is sad beyond description. The heathen are living in sin, and dying in sin. They are without God, without Christ, and without hope. I am not speaking of their future condition. I am speaking of their condition here and now. This is a solemn fact, and the true missionary cannot but place a solemn emphasis upon it. But even this cannot be regarded as the grand central motive. It is a strong motive, but not the strongest. It is not strong enough in itself to take the missionary to the field; it is certainly too weak to keep him there. The moral and spiritual condition of the heathen world tends to depress and dishearten. Its godlessness, its darkness, and its immorality often create strong aversion and deep loathing in the missionary's breast, and sometimes an intense desire to retire to a safe distance from the abomination. In itself, and alone, it tends to repel rather than to attract. What, think you, would be the effect of an attempt on the part of the missionary to fix his eyes on the bad and the vile in the life and character of the people among whom he labours? Would it not be the creation of a strong sentiment of distrust, aversion, and despair? Would it be possible for him to go on and

work for them? Pity for the heathen is a good motive; but the missionary cannot depend upon it as a permanently operative motive. There are times when love and pity seem to die down in the breast of the missionary as he comes into close contact with the badness of heathenism. What holds him fast in the midst of so much that tends to disgust and repel? I will answer that question presently. In the meantime I will repeat a little anecdote:—"Let me give you a piece of advice," said a China missionary of some years' standing to a young brother who had just arrived in the country; "I advise you to try, as quickly as possible, to love the Chinese for Christ's sake, for you will find it very difficult to love them for their own sake." That was sound advice, based upon real practical experience. Let me not be misunderstood. I do not mean to say that it is impossible to get to respect and love the Chinaman for his own sake. There are men among the heathen in China for whom I cherish very profound respect, and there are many among the converts for whom I feel the deepest personal affection. I love them, and they love me; and the number of such is increasing every day. Still what I have just said is perfectly true.

Moreover, the moral and spiritual condition of the heathen world does not present a motive strong enough to move the home churches to do their duty. "How is it possible for me to bring myself to love and pity the Chinese? They are so far away, and I know so little about them. How can you expect me to feel a deep interest in them, or to make a real sacrifice on their behalf? Both morally and spiritually they may be in a state of great destitution; but how am I to realise their

condition? How can you expect my heart to flow out towards them in love and pity? *They are so far away.*" So spoke one of the most thoughtful of our Congregational ministers to me when I was at home the last time, in 1881. I felt that there was much truth in what he said, and I made an appeal to him on another and a higher ground, an appeal to which he quickly responded. We must have something *more* than pity for the moral and spiritual condition of the heathen, if we would carry on this great missionary enterprise with unflagging energy, and see it crowned with success. The work must be done, and the sacrifice must be made, not for their sakes *only*, but for the sake of Another.

Shall we place the emphasis on the success of modern missions? The emphasis is often placed on this consideration. The past triumphs of the Gospel, and the marked success of missions during these one hundred years, are often adduced as the grand argument why men should consecrate themselves and their means to the missionary enterprise. The cry for success is loud and persistent, and there are men who profess to give only to success. That the Gospel has won great triumphs in the past is a fact that cannot be denied, and this supplies good ground for perseverance. Success inspires confidence, and it is only right that we should point to the success of modern missions in our advocacy of the cause.

But it is not *the* motive. The apostles had to start on their glorious mission without this motive. The fathers and founders of our great missionary societies had to enter on their grand enterprise without this motive. And many a missionary has had to toil on for years without

this motive. Carey had to labour on for seven years before baptizing his first convert, and so had Dr. Morrison. Thank God for success. Success is sweet and inspiring, and what success can be compared with success in the grand work of preaching the kingdom of God and saving men? But we find that we have often to work without success, and sometimes in spite of apparent failure. What then is *the* motive? What is the motive that impels the missionary forward in spite of difficulties, dangers and adverse appearances? What is *the* motive that sustained Carey, Morrison, Martyn, Judson, and many more during so many years of weary waiting? And what is the motive to arouse the churches to do their duty, apart from all considerations of success; nay, in spite of failures, should they be called upon to do so? Is there such a motive? If there is, we want to get at it. Where shall the *emphasis* be placed? Let me try and answer this all-important question.

The *emphasis* must be placed on the relation of the missionary enterprise to Jesus Christ.

First, to Christ's command:—"Go ye, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations." "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." That is the great commission, and that is our work. It is the work of the missionary, and it is the work of the church. The missionaries are in China not to promote the aggrandisement of any *ism* whatever. They are there, not to make Methodists, or Baptists, or Presbyterians, or Congregationalists, or Episcopalians, or Lutherans. They are there to preach the Kingdom of God, to make Christians, to bring that great people to Jesus Christ. Would to God that all the sectarian names now existing in China

could be blotted out, and that all the societies could unite in *one* grand organisation, having for its *one* aim the Christianisation of the Chinese people, and having for its *one* name the Name which is above every name. "Go ye, therefore, and disciple all the nations." Go, conquer the world for Me. Carry the glad tidings to all lands, and do not stop till *all* the nations have embraced the Gospel and enrolled themselves as My disciples.

That is *Christ's* command, and that is *our* work. Jesus Christ *commands*, and it is our *duty* to obey. We have no choice in the matter. As long as we acknowledge Christ to be Lord and Master, we are bound to go on with this great work. In defending the cause of missions we *dare* not take any ground lower than this. Neither is it safe to do so. "Does it not strike you," said one of the best known and most influential laymen in China to a well-known missionary, "in reading the Chinese classics, that there is much good and much to be admired in the Chinese system? Would it not be *well* to leave well enough alone?" As to the Chinese system being "well enough," I will not deal with that point just now, save to say that, whilst I freely and gladly admit that there is much to be admired in the Chinese system, I utterly deny that it is well enough, and it is my firm conviction that China will never be right whilst that system dominates the Chinese mind. But the right answer to that question is this: Would it be right to disobey Jesus Christ? That is the question which the missionary has to consider, and that is the question which the churches have to consider. It is not a matter of "letting well enough alone" at all, but a matter of obeying or disobeying the Lord Christ. Jesus Christ wills it, and we

dare not disobey. "It is the will of God." That was the motive selected by Peter the Hermit, when he wanted to arouse Europe to rescue the Holy Land from the hands of the Infidel. With that one sentence he stirred the whole of Christendom to its very depths, and kindled an enthusiasm such as history rarely presents an example of. "It is the will of Christ." That is our motive. Let us put the emphasis on that motive, and with that motive let us arouse the churches for a grander crusade, and strengthen the hearts of all Christian workers for new and nobler achievements.

Second:—The relation of the missionary enterprise to Christ's dominion and power. "All authority hath been given unto Me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore." Here we have the great fact on which the commission rests. All authority in heaven is Mine. All the resources of heaven are at My command, and shall be used by Me for the furtherance of your enterprise. All authority on earth is Mine. The world is Mine—the *whole* of it. The heathen have been given to Me for My inheritance, and the uttermost part of the earth for My possession; and, in order to conquer the world by your agency, all authority on earth has been given to Me. I have power over all persons, all passions, all movements. They are all under My control, and they will be made subservient to this one grand object—the evangelisation of the world, the Christianisation of the nations. "Go ye therefore." Thus the great commission rests on the Lordship of Christ—His Lordship over the whole world, His Lordship over the church, and His Lordship over every one of us. Christ is Lord of all; He sits on the throne, and wields the sceptre of universal dominion; He must reign till all

His enemies have become the footstool of His feet. Let us put the emphasis on that great fact.

Third. The relation of the missionary enterprise to Christ's presence. "I am with you alway." Here we have the fact on which the success of the missionary enterprise depends. "I am with you all the days." You will have your lonely days, but I am with you to brighten the most lonely of your days, and to fill your hearts with my peace. You feel your weakness and incompetence, but I am with you to guide you, to strengthen you, and to furnish you with every necessary power for your great mission. You fear for the safety of the cause. Fear not, be of good courage, I am with you. I have overcome the world, the battle is Mine, and the victory is certain. You are weak, but I am mighty. I will never leave you, never forsake you. What a glorious fact to rest our hopes upon! Christ with us every day, and every hour and every minute of the day. If Christ is with us who can be against us? Let us place the emphasis on that great fact, and go forth to conquer.

Fourth. The relation of the missionary to Christ's love. "The love of Christ constraineth us." Paul was the prince of missionaries, and in this one passage we have the secret of his power and influence as a missionary. Without the love of Christ he could have done nothing; with the love of Christ filling his heart he could do all things. "The love of Christ constraineth us." The love of Christ to *me*—to me personally—constrains me to live to Him and for Him. He died for me; my life is His. He suffered for me; I will suffer for Him. He lives for me; I will live for Him. I will

work for His sake; I will give for His sake; I will endure for His sake. There is nothing I would not do to please Him. He is my Lord and my Saviour. He loved me and gave Himself for me. I owe Him an infinite debt, a debt which is always due, and which I can never pay off. All I can do is to lay myself on the altar, and say: Lord Jesus take me, take me as I am, and use me as Thou wilt. This is a grand motive—the love of Christ to *us*, to each one of us *personally*. Let us come under the influence of this mighty motive, and we shall cease to find His service, whether in working or in giving, a burden. We shall serve the Lord with gladness, and day by day come before His presence with a song of joy. And there is Christ's love for the whole world—for all men. "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son." "He died for all." "He is the Saviour of all men." *All* men are His. His love embraces *all*, and He desires the salvation of *all*. It may be hard sometimes to love the heathen, and to make a great sacrifice on their behalf. You may find it difficult to do it for their sakes *merely*. Do it then for His sake. "I would work for the slave for his own sake," said Henry Ward Beecher on one occasion, "but I am sure that I would work ten times as earnestly for the slave for Christ's sake." Speaking of the Chinese, I can say the same thing. "I can work for the Chinese for their own sakes, but I can work ten times as earnestly for the Chinese for Christ's sake." People at home say that the heathen are so far away, and that they find it difficult to feel an interest in them and in their spiritual concerns. Be it so. But Jesus Christ is not far away. Jesus Christ is near, and it ought not to be difficult to

feel an interest in Him and in His great redemptive purposes. If we would work earnestly and successfully for the salvation of the world, we must be penetrated with the thought of Christ's love for *all* men. We must look at men with the eyes of Christ, feel for them with the heart of Christ, and work for them under the influence of the Spirit of Christ. "The love of Christ constraineth us."

"The love of Christ." This is a grand motive. If we could fairly come under its influence it would constrain us, as it did constrain the great apostle, to love Christ with a strong, personal, enthusiastic love, and to work for Christ with entire devotion and unquenchable zeal.

I often think of Paul and the great Yangtsze together. On its way to the sea the mighty stream has to encounter many obstacles, and flows in varied channels. In its upper courses, its bed in many places is uneven and narrow; but it never stops. Now it dashes against the rocks like a mad thing, and now it rushes through a narrow gorge at a mill-race speed. Then it emerges into a wide and even channel, and flows on quietly, calmly, and majestically to the sea. But its flow is ever onward, continuous, irresistible. Try and turn it back, and you will find it impossible. Tell it to stop, and it will tell you that it cannot. Ask it why, and it will reply: "A mighty law has taken possession of me, and is carrying me onwards, ever onwards. The law of gravity *constraineth* me." So it was with the great apostle. The love of Christ, like a mighty law, had taken possession of him, and was carrying him onwards, ever onward. He could not turn back, he could not stop, he could not help himself. The love of Christ constraineth *me*.

Christ's command, Christ's dominion and power, Christ's presence, Christ's love—these four combined form a mighty motive. Other motives have their place and value in our advocacy of missions; but this must ever be regarded as the supreme motive, as the grand central motive, in the missionary enterprise.

This motive clothes every other motive with new meaning and new interest. Let this motive take full possession of my soul, and the moral and spiritual condition of the heathen will impress my mind as it never did before; the relation of the missionary enterprise to the advancement of civilisation will appeal to my sympathies as it never did before; and I shall take a deeper interest in the diffusion of knowledge and the advancement of education than I ever did, or ever could have done before. Under the influence of this motive, I am made to feel that the whole world belongs to Jesus Christ, that every human being belongs to Jesus Christ, and that the salvation of the entire man, and that the uplifting of the whole race of man, come within the scope of His redemptive purposes.

This motive strengthens, ennobles, and sanctifies every other motive. It ignores none; it glorifies all.

And this motive can never pass away. Other motives come and go; but this motive abideth for ever. It can never change, it can never become obsolete. It is permanently operative and all-sufficient. Let the Church of God throughout the world place the *emphasis* on this motive, let this motive become a living force in the hearts of all Christian workers, whether at home or abroad, let it become a living force in the hearts of Christ's disciples generally, and the result will be universal triumph.

There will be no lack of either men or women to carry on the enterprise. The silver and the gold will flow in in abundance, and the best men in our universities and colleges will devote themselves to the work. The Gospel will be preached to the whole creation, God will pour of His Spirit upon all flesh, and the kingdoms of this world shall soon become the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ.

Let us then come into closer union with Jesus Christ, let us come under the all-constraining power of His mighty love, let His command become law to us, and let us identify ourselves with Him in His great redemptive purposes with regard to this sinful world—let us do this, and we shall be filled with divine power, and with Christ-like enthusiasm for God and for humanity. God will be merciful unto *us*, His people, and bless us. He will cause His face to shine upon us, and, as a result, His way shall be known upon earth and His saving health among all nations. "God shall bless *us*, and all the ends of the earth shall fear Him."

III

THE IDEAL CHRISTIAN LIFE

"He saved others; Himself He cannot save."—
MATTHEW XXVII. 42.

WHAT did these men mean to express by this taunt? Did they mean to express a disbelief in the reality of our Lord's miracles? "He *professed* to save others; but we have found Him out at last. We know now that it was all sham, all pretension. He cannot save Himself! How could He save others?" Or is there here an admission of the fact that our Lord did save others, and a faint hope expressed that He might come down from the cross and prove Himself to be the very Christ of God? Did they imagine that, by taunting Him in this way, He might be induced to give this proof of His Messiahship? "He has certainly saved others. Why does He not save Himself? Let Him do so now, and all our doubts will be removed. We will crown Him king, and follow Him whithersoever He may lead." Whatever their thoughts may have been, we know that our Lord did not gratify their vain curiosity.

In this taunt there is a great truth expressed. It is true that He saved others; it is true also that He could not save Himself. But there is another truth, and this other truth was hid from their eyes. Why could He not save Himself? The reason was not obvious to them;

but it is perfectly clear to us. He could not save Himself because He would save others. To deliver others He must surrender Himself; to save others He must sacrifice Himself. It must be the one or the other. He could not do both—save others and save Himself also.

And what is true of the Master is true of the disciple. We, the disciples of Jesus Christ, can be saviours to men only in so far as we are willing and ready to sacrifice ourselves on their behalf. Let us then spend a little time in devout meditation on this great truth.

The man who would save others must sacrifice himself. "Whom shall I send? Who will go for us?" That is God's voice to us, and it rests with ourselves as to whether we will respond to the Divine voice or not. But the moment we do respond and say, "Here am I, send me," that very moment our life must become a life of service and self-sacrifice. Let me give you two or three examples as illustrations of this great truth.

There is Moses in the Old Testament. When the time had come to deliver Israel from the bondage of Egypt, God's voice came to Moses, saying, "Whom shall I send? Who will go for us?" It was optional with Moses to go or stay. But the moment he resolved to obey the Divine voice, that very moment his life became a life of service and sacrifice. Having said *yes*, it was not optional with him as to whether his life should be a life of self-indulgence or self-abnegation. His magnificent position in Egypt had to be renounced; his brilliant prospects of future aggrandizement had to be abandoned; his dire conflict with Pharaoh, and his forty years of suffering with and for his people in that terrible

wilderness, followed as a matter of course. He lived for his people, sacrificed everything for his people, and was prepared to die for them at any moment. We know the result. Israel was saved, and God's purposes were fulfilled. Moses saved others, himself he could not save.

There is Paul in the New Testament. When the time had come to make known to the Gentiles God's redemptive purposes, a fit agent was needed, and God's voice came to Paul, saying, "Whom shall I send? Who will go for us?" It rested with Paul to decide as to whether he would or would not respond to the Divine voice; but having responded, it did not rest with him as to whether his life should or should not be a life of service and sacrifice. The moment he said, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" that moment his life became a life of self-renunciation and suffering. The hunger, the thirst, the fastings, the toil, the stripes, the imprisonments, the anxieties for the churches, and finally his martyrdom followed as a matter of course. We know the result. The Gospel was preached to the Gentiles, many churches were established in the Roman Empire, and multitudes of men were saved. Paul saved others, himself he could not save.

There is David Livingstone. When the time had come to open up the Dark Continent, and to heal "this open sore of the world," as Dr. Livingstone used to call the slave trade in Africa, God called David Livingstone. It rested with himself as to whether he would or would not obey the Divine call. But the moment he said, "Here am I, send me," his life became a life of toil and travail on behalf of Africa. The long and exhausting

journeys, the burning fever, the hunger and the thirst, and finally the lonely death at Ilala, all followed as a matter of course. He could not save Africa and save himself too. "I would forget all my cold, hunger, sufferings, and toils, if I could be the means of putting a stop to this cursed traffic." These were among the last words he ever wrote. David Livingstone saved others; himself he could not save.

And there is Jesus Himself. The time had come for the full manifestation of God's redemptive purpose. The time had come "to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness." The voice of God is heard, saying, "Whom shall I send? Who will go for us?" It rested entirely with the Eternal Son of God as to whether He would respond to that voice. There was no power in the universe to compel Him to leave heaven and come down to this earth to suffer and die. But the moment He did respond, that moment the life of sorrow and suffering, Gethsemane, and the cross, became inevitable. The life of the world depended upon that great sacrifice. Of Jesus it may be said emphatically, He saved others; Himself He could not save.

Let us now look at this great truth as an all-pervading, all-embracing law. As a law it pervades the whole of Nature. In Nature, receiving there always means giving here; life there means death here. The animal kingdom lives on the vegetable, and the vegetable lives on the mineral. The mineral must die to itself in order to build up the vegetable, and the vegetable must die to itself in order to build up the animal. The development of vegetable life depends upon the concurrence

of certain agents, such as heat, air, moisture, light, and soil. All these must die to themselves if the tree or the plant is to live and grow. In Nature there must be giving wherever there is receiving; this must be sacrificed if that is to be realised.

It is the law of natural instinct. No sooner is the child born than natural instinct steps in, and imposes this law of self-sacrifice on the mother. From this moment her life becomes a life of holy ministration, wherein, for the sake of the child, she cannot save herself. It is the law of family, social, and political life. Would you be a father or a son worthy of the name? Would you be a mother or a daughter worthy of the name? Would you be a husband or a wife worthy of the name? Would you be a brother or a sister worthy of the name? Would you be a neighbour worthy of the name? Would you be a statesman worthy of the name? If you would, you must come under this law as the law of your life.

It is the law of philanthropy. A true philanthropist, a lover of mankind, is a man who *cannot* save himself, because he *will* save others. Such was Paul, such was Howard, such was Livingstone, and such have been many more whose names I might mention.

It is the law of the Divine life. It is the life of God. The mother is the queen of the family; and yet, if a true mother, she is the servant of all its members. The father is lord of his household; and yet if a true father, he moves among its members as one that serves. So the Eternal Father, though Lord of all, is the servant of all. In the truest sense, He is the servant of servants. Out of His infinite fulness, He is ever giving forth life, breath,

and all things. Let us not fall into the delusion of supposing that, because God is omnipotent, the forth-putting of His power costs Him nothing. This is a very common supposition, but nothing can be more erroneous. Even of God Almighty it is absolutely true that He cannot save Himself. He is ever saving others; Himself He cannot save.

It is the law of the Christian life. Service, rising up to self-sacrifice for the good of men, is the ideal Christian life. Every true Christian is a priest, not merely because he stands before God alone, without the intervention of a human mediator to intercede for him, not merely because he offers to God the sacrifice of thanksgiving and praise in daily adoration, but because his life is a life of priestly ministration for others, and that in sacrifices wherein, for the sake of others, he cannot save himself. He presents himself daily to God, on behalf of humanity, in sacrifices which save men from sin and misery. Such is the priesthood of the New Testament and such is the ideal Christian life. Can you imagine a higher life than this? Can you imagine anything more God-like. It is the Christ-life. It is the noblest life possible to man.

It is emphatically the missionary's true life. It was the life of Henry Martyn. "Now," said Henry Martyn, as he set out for India, "let my life burn out for God." And it did burn out for God. There you have the true missionary.

It was the life of William Johnson, of West Africa. "Had I ten thousand lives," said William Johnson, "I would willingly offer them up for the sake of one poor negro." There you have the true missionary.

It was the life of Dober. "I determined," said Dober,

the Moravian, "if only one brother would go with me to the West Indies, I would give myself to be a slave, and would tell the slaves as much of the Saviour as I know myself." There you have the true missionary.

It was the life of Francis Xavier. "Care not for me," said Xavier; "think of me as dead to bodily comforts. My food, my rest, and my life are to rescue from the granary of Satan the souls for whom God has sent me hither from the ends of the earth. They will destroy me by poison, you say. It is an honour to which a sinner such as I am may not aspire. But this I dare to say, that whatsoever form of torture or death awaits me, I am ready to suffer it ten thousand times for a single soul." There you have the true missionary.

It was emphatically the life of the apostle Paul, the greatest missionary the world has ever seen. If there ever has been a life all aflame with the love of Christ, if any life has ever burnt out for God and for humanity, surely that life was the life of the great apostle of the Gentiles.

This, then, is the missionary's true life. A self-seeking, self-centred, self-indulgent missionary is a pitiable object to behold. He may call himself a missionary, the directors of his society may put him down as one of their missionaries, and speak of him as our able missionary, our highly valued missionary, our well-known missionary, and so on and so on, but in God's sight he is a contemptible hireling. Every missionary *ought* to be a self-sacrificing man, and every missionary worthy of the name *is* a self-sacrificing man. Still, the true missionary will not look upon himself as a self-sacrificing man, neither will he speak of his work, and the trials in

connection with it, as if he looked upon God as his debtor. His sense of indebtedness to his God and Saviour will make it impossible for him to do that. "Can that be called a sacrifice," asked Dr. Livingstone, "which is simply paid back as a small part of a great debt owing to God which we can never repay? Say rather it is a privilege." Then the missionary finds that his best work is very poor and imperfect, and that, try as he will, he can never come up to his own ideal. "My doings! my doings!" said John Elliot, the apostle of the Indians, "they have been poor and lean doings. Oh, child of the dust, lie low; it is Christ that hath triumphed."

Such is the Christian's true life. Such emphatically is the missionary's true life.

But how far is this life from being fully realised by Christians generally? How far from being fully realised by ministers at home and missionaries abroad? How far from being fully realised by any one of us? Some of us may have lofty ideals as to what we should be in this respect; but is there one among us who has realised his ideal?

Some will sacrifice much in one direction, but not in another. They will sacrifice in the line of their liking. But can that be called a sacrifice which a man does in the line of his liking? Ask them to step out of that line, and you will find that the idea of the Cross has never entered into their conception of the Christian life. For instance, some will talk much, and talk eloquently, but are slow to do. They are born preachers, and their Christian life begins and ends in telling others what to do. Then some will work hard, but are slow to give of

their means. And some will give freely, but are slow to work. They will gladly pay others to do the work for them; but they will not touch the burden themselves. Then some will work and give; but will not suffer pain or endure trial. And some will suffer much when called upon to do so; but they will not take trouble. They have no patience for the drudgery and worry inseparably connected with all true work. The pin-pricks torment them, and spoil their best efforts. All that is disagreeable they shirk, and make the agreeable and the congenial the main considerations in their choice of service. To realise the life of which I have been speaking in all its fulness, the sacrifice must be an all-around sacrifice. We must be prepared to sacrifice in all directions. The element of self-pleasing must be cast out, and the will of God must become to us the one law of our being.

What some seek in the Christian life is the salvation of their own souls. This is a worthy aim. What shall I do to be saved? That is a question which the soul naturally asks when it first turns to its Saviour. The soul is a pearl of priceless value, and the salvation of my own soul is a matter of infinite moment to me. It is something gained when a man begins to recognise the fact that he has a soul, and that its salvation is a matter of importance. Most men are interested in their bodies only. What shall we eat? What shall we drink? What shall we put on? With the vast majority of men these are the all-absorbing questions from year's end to year's end. No man can be a Christian who does not rise far above this, and to whom personal salvation, the salvation of the soul, has not become a matter of supreme concern. But the Christian life does not begin and end

with concern about one's *own* soul. Are there not other souls in the world needing salvation? Are they not as precious as my own? Has not Christ taken possession of my sinful soul, and redeemed it in order that I might yield it up to Him a pure and free-will offering on behalf of the perishing souls around me? Of even the soul, it is solemnly true that "he who findeth his soul shall lose it; and he that loseth his soul shall find it."

What others seek in the Christian life is their own salvation from sin. This is also a worthy aim. It is a good step in advance when a man begins to realise that the salvation of the soul means salvation from *sin*, that the real hell which he has to dread is *sin*, and that there is no true heaven for him, either in this world or in the world to come, whilst under its dominion. But the Christian life does not begin and end in anxiety about one's *own* sin. Is not the world full of sin? Am I to feel no concern about the sins of others? If you are in Christ Jesus, you are free from sin—free from its curse, and free from its power. Jesus has set you free, and He has done so in order that you might take your stand by His side as one of God's anointed ones, to preach good tidings to the poor, and to set at liberty them that are bound. As free men in Christ, the question with you now should be, not What shall I do to save my *own* soul from sin, but What can I do to save a world perishing in sin?

And what some seek in the Christian life is the enjoyment of religion. They are sure that they are in Christ Jesus, and that to them there is now no condemnation. They are delighted with the assurance of their own safety, and straightway sit down to enjoy themselves. I am

not speaking of the joy of the Lord, which is the Christian's strength. I am not speaking of the peace of Christ, which He called His own peace, and which He promised to every one who would follow in His footsteps. I am speaking of that kind of enjoyment which begins and ends in mere sentiment. I am speaking of that sentimental craving for the sweets—the sugar and plums—of religion. I am speaking of that type of the religious life which finds its fittest expression in the words enjoy, enjoyable, and the like. How I did *enjoy* that sermon? It was so eloquent. I do *enjoy* the prayers of Mr. So-and-So! They are so beautiful. Have you heard Mr. So-and-So preach? It is such a *treat* to hear him at his best. I do *enjoy* conventions! Have you been to Keswick or Llandrindod? I wish you would go this year. You would so *enjoy* it. And so on, and so on *ad infinitum*. Now all that sort of thing is very well in its way. It is quite right that we should find joy, and abundance of joy, in the religious life. But the vital question is: What are we *doing* for the salvation of men? What are we *doing* for the advancement of God's kingdom in the world? That is the solemn question for you and me to consider. What does the enjoyment lead to? Does it take me out of myself, and make me less selfish and less slothful in my Master's service? Or does it not the rather feed the self within me, and make me less and less disposed for life's real work? Enjoyment! God has not called us to a life of ease and enjoyment, but to a life of self-renunciation, self-crucifixion, and entire devotion to His will and redemptive purposes.

What, then, must we, as followers of Jesus Christ, seek to be? We must seek to be true priests of God on behalf

of humanity. Who is the true priest? The true priest is a holy man, forgiven by God, separated by God, consecrated to God, and filled with the peace of God, and with power for service. Thank God, the Christian Church has never been wholly destitute of such men. Thank God, there are in the world to-day true priests of God. There are consecrated men and women who *cannot* save themselves, because they are *absorbed* in the Christ-like work of saving others. Their grand aim in life is to save men, and therefore they do not and cannot spare themselves, do not and cannot save themselves. And the world is growing richer in such men every day. In no past age have there been so many as are to be found to-day.

May God fill the world with such men, and let us seek to be among them. Let us seek to be filled with true enthusiasm for God and humanity. Let us beware of the false enthusiasm which professes to burn for God, but is indifferent to the claims of our brother man. Let us seek to be filled with the Christ-in-us enthusiasm which burned in the heart of the great apostle of the Gentiles —the enthusiasm which compelled him to look upon himself as a debtor to *all* men, and which made him the mighty spiritual force that he *was* in his own day, that he *is* in our day, and that he *will be* to the end of time.

Would we enter fully into this Christ-like life of which I have been speaking? Then we must *believe* in it. We must believe in it as the life *indeed;* we must believe in it as the *highest* and *noblest* life; and we must believe in it as a life *possible* to us. A distinguished preacher, speaking of the death of Christ, said: "We cannot follow

Him there. He is an example for us in His humility, in His patience, in His friendliness of disposition, and so forth. But when He hangs upon the cross we cannot follow Him there. Self-preservation is the first law of life." That is one view of the matter, and a very low, secular, contemptible view it is. To the man who holds it, the life of which I have been speaking is and ever will be impossible. But there is another view of the matter, and it is given by the apostle John. "Hereby know we love; because He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." Not "hereby know we the love of *God*," but hereby know we *love*, that is, love in its character and essence, love as it has been manifested by God for me, and as it ought to be manifested by me for my brother man. That is the apostle John's view of the Christian's true life, and no one knew the mind of the Master better than he. Yes, dear friends, we must be ready to follow Him even when He hangs upon the cross. We must be prepared for even this, if we would take our stand by the side of the "Great Martyr," and be saviours to men.

Young Voltaire, having completed his studies, was standing before his father in the library. "My son," said his father, "have you determined upon what career you would prefer to enter?" "I should like to be a *reformer*, my father," replied the young man. "And have you, my son, considered the fate of reformers?" "And what may the fate of reformers be, my father?" For sole answer to young Voltaire's query, his father gravely pointed to a painting representing Jesus on the cross.

Yes, thank God, this high and noble life is possible to

us. But let us never forget that it becomes possible to us only as we *abide* in Christ. "He that abideth in Me and I in him, the same beareth much fruit; for apart from Me ye can do nothing." Whilst, however, we can do nothing *apart* from Christ, *in* Christ we can do *all* things. "I can do *all* things *in* Christ that strengtheneth me." There you have the true source of power. Apart from Christ I can do nothing; in Christ, in living union and constant fellowship with Christ, I can do all things. "If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatsoever ye will, and it shall be done unto you." Ask *whatsoever* ye will as my disciples; ask whatsoever ye will in *union* with me, as *one* with me, and it shall be done unto you. Do you need power? Ask for power. Do you need wisdom? Ask for wisdom. Do you need guidance? Ask for guidance. Do you need grace? Ask for grace. "Ask whatsoever ye will." Only abide in me, and let my words abide in you, and nothing will be impossible to you.

Yes, this glorious life is possible to every one of us; for Jesus, the author and perfector of our Faith, has made it possible. He has taught it, He has lived it, and He has shown us how we may live it too. His voice to us to-day is: "Follow Me." "Take up thy cross and follow Me." "Deny thyself and follow Me." "Learn of Me." "Abide in Me." May God help us to hear and obey that voice; may it be an ambition to follow the Christ and become, in our measure, veritable saviours to men.

The great need of the age is men, not rich men, not wise men, not learned men—we have them in abundance—but men of deep convictions, men who are conscious of the all-consuming power of the love of God, men

with whom it is a passion to save men, men who are prepared to dare all things and endure all things in order to finish the work which they feel in their inmost soul that God has given them to do.

May God make us men and women of this stamp, and may we so live that those who know us best may be able to say of each one of us when we have passed away, "He saved others; himself he could not save. She saved others; herself she could not save."

IV

WHY DO I BELIEVE IN MISSIONS?

"He will famish all the gods of the earth."—ZEPHANIAH II. 11.
"Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth."—MATTHEW VI. 10.

I AM sometimes asked if I believe the evangelisation of India, China and Japan to be within the bounds of possibility. Many doubt this, and look upon every attempt to Christianise a people like the Chinese, Hindus or Japanese as futile, and upon those who are engaged in the work as so many fanatics or impostors. During a missionary career of more than fifty years I have seen much of the missionary life. Its trials, disappointments and discouragements are not unknown to me. The field in which I have been working is not only the largest, but, taking it all in all, the most difficult also. And yet my convictions with regard to the divinity of the work and its final triumph are stronger to-day than they were when I first went to China. I never believed more firmly than I do to-day that the kingdoms of the world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ. Allow me now to state some of the reasons which induce me to believe in the reality and ultimate success of the missionary enterprise.

I might dwell on the bright future revealed in God's

Word. The past is dark, the present may be unsatisfactory, but there is a future all radiant and glorious, foretold in this blessed volume, in which the missionary delights to live, and from which he draws strength and consolation. Dr. Judson was asked on one occasion what were the prospects for the conversion of the Burmese. He replied: "The prospects for the conversion of the Burmese are as bright as the promises of God." Do you ask me what are the prospects for the conversion of the Chinese? My reply is: "The prospects for the conversion of the Chinese are as bright as the promises of God."

I might also dwell on the light in which idolatry is regarded by God. I am sometimes asked, "Why attempt to unsettle the religious convictions of a highly civilised nation like the Chinese? Is not the Supreme Governor of the Universe equally pleased with the homage of all His rational creatures, when proceeding from sincere devotion, whether according to one mode or another of the various religions which He has permitted to exist?" Lord Macartney, our first ambassador to China, in the year 1793, wrote in this style to the Chinese Emperor, and gave it as the reason why the English never attempted to dispute or disturb the worship or tenets of others. This is the light in which idolatry was regarded by the English ambassador more than a hundred years ago, and it is the light in which it is regarded by many to-day. But in whatever light idolatry is regarded by men, we know that it is not a thing on which God can look with complacency or even indifference. It is a thing which God hates and abominates. It must be abolished. "He will famish

all the gods of the earth." The day is coming when all men shall turn away from these dumb idols and bring no more oblations and sacrifices to them. Thus God will starve them out; and "men shall worship Him, every one from his place," that is, each in his gentile home. God shall be worshipped, not only by the tribes of Israel, but by every kindred and tribe on this terrestrial ball.

But I will not dwell on these two points just now. Let us consider our hopes and convictions with regard to the moral and spiritual progress of the race.

I believe in the progress of the race, not only in material prosperity, but in moral and spiritual prosperity also. Some tell us that the world is going back; I feel sure that it is going forward. There is more moral and spiritual power in the world to day than there ever was before. True, the progress is slow, and not always in a straight line; but there is progress nevertheless. There may be sometimes something like a retrograde movement, but the retrogression is only in appearance. The onward course of the race has been compared to that of a ship making her way against the breeze. It consists of a series of movements, each one of which seems to bear her away from the true direction, yet in fact brings her nearer and nearer to her destined haven. We believe that the race is to advance, though it be through various windings, and in spite of many attempts to arrest its progress. However unsatisfactory the present may be, we confidently look forward to a new era, "When all men's good shall be each man's rule, and universal peace lie like a shaft of light across the land, and like a lane of beams athwart the sea." But if the race is to advance,

and ultimately realise the grand object of its existence, idolatry must perish. It stands in the way, and must cease to be.

Like unto themselves are the gods which men have made for themselves: and this is one reason why the idolater has sunk so deep in moral and spiritual degradation. The worshipper cannot stand on a higher moral platform than the object of his adoration. But look at the gods of the nations. Idolatry is often marked by two striking features—impurity and cruelty, and where such is the case its influence must be unspeakably corrupting and degrading. But even where it is not associated with gross vice and palpable cruelty, its influence is baneful beyond description. It tends to hold the human spirit spell-bound, and prevents it from rising above its own dead level.

Look at China. I do not see how China can rise morally and spiritually without the Gospel of Jesus Christ. There is no power in the national faiths to save the individual from sin, or to lift the nation out of its moral and spiritual degradation. Buddhism as it is seen in China to-day is a system of senseless idolatry and gross superstition, and so is Taoism. These two systems have succeeded in making the people extremely superstitious, but in no way religious. The tendency of Confucianism has been to dry up the religious sentiment in the Chinese mind, and to leave it the most unspiritual thing imaginable. The Confucian scholars boast of their indifference, ignorance, and scepticism, with regard to everything pertaining to religious questions. In their estimation religion, in the proper acceptation of the term, is the most contemptible thing in the land. As to the

people at large, they worship without cherishing a particle of true reverence for the objects of their worship. The Chinese are a shrewd, practical, commercial, secular people, and never more so than in their religious performances. In the temple, as well as in the shop, they have a steady eye to business. They bargain with their gods just as they do with each other, and their religion is a purely commercial transaction. A sense of sin, contrition for sin, humble gratitude, spiritual communion, reverence, love—these, and elements such as these, do not enter into the composition of their worship.

And the Chinese are as devoid of moral earnestness as they are of religious earnestness. I am sometimes asked: "Why trouble the Chinese with the Gospel? Are they not a *moral* people? Are they not as moral as we are?" Well, if I were to admit that the Chinese were a moral people, and that they were as moral as we are, I should still go and preach the Gospel to them. Are not the claims of God to the reverence of the Chinese to be taken into account? Are not claims of Christ to the allegiance of the Chinese to be taken into account? Is not the great commission of our Lord to be taken into account? Are the Chinese nothing to God's heart, and is it right that God and His redemptive love should be nothing to them? Are the Chinese nothing to Christ, and is it right that Christ and His cross should be nothing to them? Is not the Gospel a blessing and a necessity to us apart from all considerations of morality? Let us never forget that Christianity is not a mere system of morals, but a Divine religion, and that the missionary's *main* aim in going to China, or to any other part of the

heathen world, is not to teach a system of ethics, but to preach Christ and His great salvation.

But looking at the Chinese from a moral standpoint, I do not hesitate to say that one of China's greatest needs is the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Morally the nation is rotten through and through. Bribery, corruption, and extortion fill the land. From the beggar's hovel to the dragon throne there is a lamentable absence of truth and honour. There is sin and shame everywhere. There is nothing in China that makes for God; and consequently there is hardly a thing there that makes for righteousness. It is this moral corruption that makes some of us despair, or almost despair, as we think of the future of that great empire. The Chinese may talk about reform and attempt reform, but unless there is a great *moral* reformation of the nation, it will all come to nothing. One of the pressing needs of China to-day is a great *moral* re-birth, and the Gospel alone can effect this.

You hear a great deal about *religious* heathen and *moral* heathen. I am only sorry to say that you hear more about them *here* a great deal than you can see of them *yonder*. I do not say that there are none among the heathen who are honestly striving to live up to the light which they possess; but I do say that, during a long missionary career of more than fifty years, I have met with but few who have appeared to me to possess any claim to this encomium, and I do not hesitate to add that the number of such is so small that it would be misleading to take them into consideration.

But I am reminded that wicked men and wickedness abound in Christian lands. True! sadly true! Yet

there is a difference, and a very great difference. There are in England to-day men as selfish, sensual, and wicked as you can find in China. But there are in England also Christ-like men, who can say with their Divine Master that it is their meat and drink to do the will of their Father in Heaven and finish His work. In England you have darkness enough and corruption enough; but in England you have also the salt of the earth and the light of the world. There is a *dark* England; and, thank God, there is the way out. And this is to be ascribed to the fact that Jesus Christ is there pointing out the way and leading on. There is a "submerged tenth" in England; and, thank God, there are men and women in England, in whom the Spirit of Christ lives and reigns, who are doing their utmost to uplift the sunken mass out of its physical, social, mental, moral, and spiritual misery. This makes an enormous difference. "It is not necessary," said Macaulay many years ago, "that a man should be a Christian to wish for the propagation of Christianity in India. It is sufficient that he be a European, not much below the ordinary European level of good sense and humanity." The same thing may be said of China, and of all lands in which heathenism reigns. Idolatry is a debasing, demoralising thing; spiritual strength and moral beauty cannot grow in such a soil.

Believing, then, that the race, as a race, is to advance, and become what our deepest convictions, as well as the Bible, tell us it must become, we are compelled to conclude, and that in spite of all unfavourable appearances, that idolatry must perish—perish in Africa, perish in India, perish in China, perish in Japan, perish in Korea,

perish everywhere. The progress of the race is bound up with the progress of Christ's kingdom. Christianity alone can awaken all the possibilities of a man's nature, and clothe humanity with strength, beauty, and grandeur. "He will famish all the gods of the earth."

Let us consider again the momentous fact that] Jesus Christ, as God manifest in the flesh, is the great need of the world. There is a tendency these days to classify Christ with the great religious teachers of the past, and to treat Christianity as if it were nothing more than *one* among the many of the world's faiths. Now if Jesus Christ were a *mere* man, and if the Gospel were a *mere* product of the human imagination, this tendency would be just and reasonable. But if Jesus is God, and if the Gospel is Divine, this tendency must be denounced as having its origin in ignorance, or prejudice, or both. "What blindness, what prepossession," says Rousseau, "must it be to compare Socrates with Jesus! What an infinite disproportion there is between them." So may I say: "What blindness, what prepossession, must it be to compare Confucius, or Buddha, or Mohammed with Christ! What an infinite disproportion there is between them."

Confucius was a good man and a great teacher. But Confucius was a *mere* man, and had his sins and weaknesses like other men. He was not perfect, and he did not claim perfection. He had no message of salvation to a sinful world. He had no light to throw upon God's being and redemptive purposes. Confucius disliked to touch on theological subjects. He clung to the seen and the temporal with a tenacious grasp. The invisible, the spiritual, and the eternal had no

charm for him. On all the great questions of theology Confucius was an agnostic. Confucianism is essentially a system of morals, applicable only to this life, and confined to the duties which arise from the various human relations. There was nothing *divine* about Confucius. You never feel when you come in contact with Confucius that you are touching God. In gazing on the face of this man, though a great man, there is nothing that reminds you of the Father. Confucius, though China's greatest sage, cannot be compared with Jesus, the Christ of God and the Saviour of the world. What an infinite disproportion there is between them!

Buddha was a good man, and one of the greatest sages the world can boast of. He possessed a soul of great purity and tenderness. But Buddha, like Confucius, was a *mere* man, and, unlike Confucius, a man regarding whose personal history very little can be ascertained with perfect certainty. Buddhism, as it dropped from the lips of its founder, is no religion at all, but rather a system of duty, morality, and benevolence. It represents God as a negation, existence itself as an evil, and the chief good as eternal nothingness. The heaven which it proclaims is a heaven of extinction; and the way of salvation which it points out to man is the path which leads out of existence into non-existence. Philosophic Buddhism is atheism pure and simple, whilst popular Buddhism is, as I have already said, a system of gross superstition and senseless idolatry. What comparison can there be between the man Gautama Buddha, proclaiming that there is no God and that existence is vain, and the God-Man Christ Jesus, revealing the everlasting Father and bringing

life and immortality to light? Is not the disproportion between them infinite?

Mohammed was a remarkable man, and the influence in the world has been great and commanding. But Mohammed was a *mere* man, and morally a very imperfect man also. Of Mohammedanism it has been truly said that the many false and evil elements in it have made it one of the curses of mankind. It could not rise above its source; and it has everywhere illustrated or exaggerated the vices of its founder. It has spread abroad the spirit of cruelty and lust; and under its sway are found slavery, the oppression of subject races, and the degradation of woman. Between Christ and Mohammed the contrast is complete; and the disproportion between the religion of the Koran and the religion of the New Testament is simply infinite.

I have no time to speak of Hinduism, with its subtle pantheism on the one hand, and its gross polytheism on the other. Hinduism is, as it has been often observed, absolutely devoid of an ideal life. Its incarnations are grotesque, vicious, and corrupting; its very gods are cruel, lustful, and capricious: and many of its religious practices are unutterable, foul, and degrading. Caste, one of its most essential elements, "is the most complete *denial* that has yet been framed of the brotherhood of man." Some of its most cruel practices—such as self-immolation, human sacrifices, and the burning of widows—have been abolished. But it must never be forgotten that they have been abolished not by Hinduism, but by Christianity, and in the teeth of the supporters of Hinduism. They have been "abolished by the influence of a Christian people, and because such practices could

not possibly exist where Christianity had the slightest power." The contrast between Christianity and Hinduism is complete, and the disproportion between Hinduism and Christianity is simply infinite.

Let me not be misunderstood. I do not mean to say that there is no truth in these non-Christian creeds; neither do I mean to say that they have done no good in the past. There is much truth in some of them, and some of them have been productive of much good. None of them are wholly false, and none of them are without some soul of goodness. But I do mean to say that there is much darkness in them all, and that the darkness in some of them is much greater than the light. They are now mere obstacles in the way of all true progress. There are signs of progress to be witnessed these days in China, and other parts of the heathen world. The progress in Japan is one of the great marvels of the age. But let it never be forgotten that all this progress is to be ascribed, not to the native faiths, but to Christianity. The movement in every case is a Christian movement, to be ascribed to the influence of Christianity and Christendom on the non-Christian peoples.

Look at the present awakening of China. To what is it to be ascribed? No one would think of ascribing it to Buddhism and Taoism. Shall we ascribe it to Confucianism? Certainly not. Confucianism is intensely conservative; and the Confucian school, up to the present time, has been strongly opposed to all change. In their essential character these non-Christian faiths are unprogressive. Whatever work they had to do they have done. They are now mere obstructions, and must pass away, if the countries which they dominate are

to advance in religion, morality, and civilisation. They possess no moral or spiritual truth of any value which is not to be found in Christianity, whilst in Christianity there are truths of infinite moment to man of which they know nothing. "What is good in them appears more full and complete in Christianity; what is wrong in them is corrected by Christianity; and what is defective in them is supplied by Christianity." Though they possess certain moral precepts and sayings of more or less value and beauty, they have no life-giving power. You may call each one of them *a* religion if you please; but Christianity is *the* religion—absolute and final. I do not look upon Jesus Christ as one among the many, but as the *one* Saviour of men. I do not look upon Christianity as one among the many, but as God's *one* message of salvation to a sinful world.

These systems of religion have had their day. Some of them have disappeared wholly; all of them have lost the vitality they once had; and the day cannot be far distant when they shall have ceased to be. But Christianity is God's own creation and cannot pass away. Human nature could not have created it out of its own resources. In its origin and essence it infinitely transcends man's mightiest achievement. The great need of Asia to-day is a Divine Saviour; and Jesus Christ, as God manifest in the flesh, meets this need. "In none other is there salvation." That was true in the days of the apostles, it is true to-day; and it will be true to the end of time. Jesus Christ, as God manifest in the flesh, is the great need of the world, and this is a momentous fact. It is with me a *main* reason for believing in the REALITY of the missionary enterprise, and

in the ultimate triumph of the Gospel in every part of the world.

Let us consider, again, the relation of the Holy Spirit to the missionary enterprise. "I believe in the Holy Ghost." We have been told lately that the Holy Spirit is, and always has been, the mightiest missionary in the world, and that is true. Wherever the missionary is, there the Omnipotent Spirit is also to inspire, strengthen and guide him, and to move the hearts of men to receive the truth as preached by him. The foolishness of preaching has ever been scorned by the unbelieving world. "Are the missionaries mad? Do they expect to convert such countries as India, China, and Japan by preaching sermons?" Men forget, will forget, that the Gospel is not a product of this earth, but a Divine thing sent down from heaven itself; that the power is not of the missionary, but of God; and that the Holy Spirit is ever present with the missionary, energising *in*, and *by*, and *through* the truth. These are the facts which give weight and meaning to the missionary enterprise; and these are the facts which we must ever bear in mind if we would see the enterprise crowned with success. When Dr. Morrison was going to China he was asked if he expected to make an impression on the idolatry of the Chinese Empire. "No," was the reply, "but I expect God will." Exactly so. However weak and helpless the missionary may feel himself to be, he cannot despair; for he goes forth, not in his own strength, not in his own might, but in the strength of the Lord and in the power of His might. Conscious that the Gospel is Divine, and that the Holy Ghost is ever with him, he fears not to face the most gigantic form of

error and darkness, and say, "I am stronger than thou art, and thou shalt perish." He sows beside all waters, he drops the Divine seed where thorns and thistles grow, and scatters it on the rocks. He is not weary in well-doing, for his faith in the Divinity of his message, and in the abiding presence of the Omnipotent Spirit, assures him that he shall reap if he faints not.

Let us consider, lastly, the present aspect of the work. Is it such as to inspire confidence in the reality and ultimate success of the missionary enterprise? I think it is. God has not only promised to do great things. He has done great things. Let us just glance over the mission fields, and see what has been accomplished by the modern mission.

Look at Polynesia. What a transformation in the social, moral, and spiritual condition of the inhabitants of those islands! Previous to the arrival of the missionaries, in 1797, there was not a native Christian in the whole of that region. For years the missionaries laboured in the midst of indescribable disappointments, discouragements, and personal sufferings. Some of them were murdered, and some of them proved unfaithful. In those beautiful islands idolatry was associated with the grossest vices and most cruel practices. Cannibalism, human sacrifices, infanticide, and the murder of the aged and diseased were common everywhere. You know how all that has been changed, and changed by the Gospel of Christ. Now those islands abound in schools and churches, and the churches are for the most part self-supporting. Some of them exhibit a high degree of Christian life, and are striving earnestly to send the Gospel to the regions beyond.

Look at Madagascar. The church in Madagascar can boast of martyrs who have suffered the direst tortures and died the most excruciating deaths rather than deny the Lord that bought them. Fire and sword have been employed there to annihilate the Church, but in vain. There the blood of the martyrs has been the seed of the Church in modern times. The tens whom the missionaries left behind them when banished from the islands multiplied into hundreds during their absence, and now the native communicants are reckoned by the tens of thousands, and the native adherents by the hundreds of thousands.

Look at Africa. When I was a lad the interior of Africa was marked on our maps as unexplored. The opening of that dark land is one of the great marvels of the nineteenth century. The great unknown continent is unknown to us no longer. Its immense resources have been disclosed to us, and its multitudinous peoples have been brought to our doors. Steamboats sail its rivers and lakes, roads are being built, and railways constructed in every direction, and the most important points along its coast line and its most important interior centres are actually occupied by missionaries. It is wonderful how the modern mission, with its Christian civilisation, is invading every part of that strange land. Hitherto Africa has been regarded as one of the hardest of the mission fields, and yet the Gospel has been proving itself to be the power of God even in that dark region. There are in Africa to-day hundreds of thousands of native Christians. The changes that have been taking place in Africa in recent years are momentous in their character. Our prayer is that all

may be made subservient to the winning of Africa for Christ.

Look at India. In the year 1793 Mr. Lushington, a director of the East India Company, stated publicly that were 100,000 natives converted he should hold it as the greatest calamity that could befall India. One of the directors declared that he would rather see a band of devils in India than a band of missionaries. Thus, in India, the Gospel has had to contend with the prejudices of so-called Christian men, and the opposition of a Christian government, as well as with the dark and cruel superstitions of the heathen. Yet there are in India to-day more than a million of converts in connection with the Protestant Church. But, thankful as I am for the numerical increase, I feel still more thankful for the indubitable evidence we have of a vast amount of preparatory work which has been accomplished in India. Christianity is slowly but most surely undermining the very foundations of Satan's kingdom in the land, and silently effecting a revolution in the religious, moral and social life of the people that will astonish the world some day.

Look at Japan, that beautiful country, aptly called by its inhabitants "The Land of the Gods." Sixty years ago Japan was known to the outer world chiefly for its extreme exclusiveness, and its savage hatred of the Christian religion. The old edict was still in force. It reads thus: "So long as the sun shall warm the earth, let no Christian be so bold as to come to Japan; and let all know that the king of Spain himself, or the Christians' God, or the Great God of all, if he violate this command, shall pay for it with his head." There you have the

Japan of only sixty years ago. Sixty years ago there was not a Protestant Christian in the whole of Japan. There are now about 70,000 church members. But this is not all. One of the most distinguished pastors in Japan recently said: "There are in Japan more than 1,000,000 people who have not publicly professed Christianity, but who are ordering their lives by the teachings of the Bible, and require now only to be brought to a public confession of their faith." This statement was repeated to Dr. Nakashima, Professor of Psychology in the Imperial University, and he remarked: "Yes, there are more." When the Gospel will conquer Japan I cannot say; but I do know that many of the missionaries labouring there are very sanguine with regard to the future, never more so than now.

Look at Korea. Compared with China, Korea is not large, having an area of only 85,000 square miles, and the population is only about 15,000,000. The first Protestant missionaries began work there in 1882. At the end of twelve years there were one hundred and twenty converts, and to-day (twelve years later) there is a Christian constituency of 100,000 people. Korea has come to be a marvel of missionary progress. It looks now as if the Koreans were to be the first people in the Far East to be won for Christ. The people, we are told, are crowding into the churches and preaching places, and baptisms are taking place with an acceleration that has perhaps not been equalled in recent missionary history.

Now let us look at China. A vast amount of work has been accomplished in China, and great results have

been achieved. The barriers are being surmounted one by one, and our prospects are becoming brighter and brighter as the years roll on. In the present stage of our work in that empire, I attach no great value to the statistics of our missions as an index of their success. The progress cannot be measured by the sole test of counting heads. There are results which cannot possibly be reckoned by numbers or reported in figures; and there are benefits springing from missionary labour which cannot be tabulated by statistics. Think of China's great awakening, one of the most wonderful events of the age in which we live. Its connection with a whole century of missionary labour is obvious enough. But how are you going to report it in figures or tabulate it by statistics? Yet I am glad to say that the statistics of our missions in China are such as to inspire confidence. At the beginning of the first century of missions in China, there was not a single Protestant convert in the whole of that vast empire; and now, at its close, there are more than 180,000 communicants, representing a Christian community of about half a million souls. That seems to me to be wonderful progress, looking at it simply in the light of numerical increase. In 1820 Dr. Milne, judging by the appearance of things at that time, ventured to predict that, "at the close of the first century from the commencement of the missions, the country would have one thousand Christians," *and he includes in this number all children of converts.* Such was his forecast, and he rejoiced in the prospect. What would have been his feelings if he could have had a vision of what we see to-day? Among the converts in China there are men and women who have

undoubtedly been born again. I doubt if you have in England better Christians than some of the Christians I have known in China. In China, as in every part of the mission field, the Lord is adding to the Church daily such as shall be saved.

I might speak of other heathen lands, and show that the Christ is everywhere leading on His Church from victory to victory; but I have no time to do so on this occasion. I have said enough to show that the modern mission, looking at it in the light of its past triumphs, is not a failure. I have shown that our Lord is actually taking possession of the kingdoms of this world, and that Christianity is everywhere proving itself to be the *world* religion. It has passed from land to land, it has established itself in all climes, and it is proving itself to be God's message of salvation among men of every race.

Thus the present aspect of the work, in every part of the mission field, induces me to believe that the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ. Brethren, let us not be discouraged. This is God's work. He is gradually, but surely, leading the world back to Himself. The brutish gods of Egypt and the impure divinities of Syria have all perished. The divinities of Greece and Rome have been long dead. The early religion of the Teutonic and Scandinavian peoples, with all its strange myths, has wholly disappeared. Just as surely as the false gods of Europe *have* been abolished, the false gods of Asia *shall* be abolished. "He will famish all the gods of the earth."

May God deepen your interest in this great work.

May He cause all scepticism, all coldness, and all indifference with regard to it to pass away from your hearts. And may He so inspire us all with love to Christ and compassion for men, that we shall feel it to be, not only a solemn duty, but a great privilege, to contribute to the missionary cause according to our means, and labour on its behalf according to our ability.

V

THE MESSAGE

"Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light."

MATTHEW XI. 28—30.

IN the preceding verse our Lord speaks of Himself as the one true Revealer of God, as the one true Revealer of the Father. He speaks of Himself as the Divinely authorised Revealer, the absolutely perfect Revealer, and the indispensable Revealer. "All things have been delivered unto Me of My Father: and no one knoweth the Son, save the Father; neither doth any know the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal Him." And now our Lord, as the one perfect Revealer of the Father, looks upon the afflicted and sin-burdened souls before Him with infinite compassion, and tenderly invites them to come unto Him for rest. "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." More gracious words than these never dropped from the lips of even the Son of God. The crowd before Him presented a sad spectacle to His compassionate eye. He saw them groaning under various burdens, some under one and some under another. They had their social burdens, domestic burdens, political burdens, physical burdens, mental burdens. They had also

their religious burdens. The ceremonial laws and the traditions of the elders constituted a grievous burden—a burden which the nation, as a nation, felt to be intolerable. The heaviest burden of all was the burden of sin. These people were groaning under the yoke of sin, and struggling in vain to obtain deliverance. It was this burden that gave crushing force to all the other burdens. Sin is the burden of burdens. Such was the spectacle which that crowd presented to the eye of Christ. As He gazes on the crowd, His heart is moved to its deepest depth, and in words of fathomless tenderness He invites them one and all to come to Him, and be at rest. Oh, ye weary ones, tired of the world, tired of life, tired of yourselves, tired of your religious teachers, tired of religion itself, come unto Me. "I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls."

Let me observe, in passing, that the rest which our Lord promises is spiritual rest—rest of soul. He does not promise freedom from all toil, and labour, and trial. What He promises is that if we come to Him in the spirit of true humility, obedience, and faith, He will so teach us, so charge us, and so help us that we shall find the trials of life wholesome, and the burdens of life despoiled of their crushing weight.

I would observe also that the rest promised by our Lord is not the rest of inactivity. "Take My yoke upon you." Christ's yoke is the yoke which He imposes on His followers, namely, absolute subjection to Himself, as He was in absolute subjection to the Father. It is the yoke of absolute obedience to the requirements and demands of Christ. And what are the demands of Christ? He demands a righteousness exceeding that of

the Scribes and Pharisees. He demands an obedience more inward and more implicit than was ever exacted by any human teacher. He demands the surrender of the will itself. He demands our love, our deepest love, our supreme love. He bids us learn of Him, learn from His teachings, and learn from His example. He bids us follow Him, no matter how rough the road, no matter how great the trials. "Follow Me." "Take up thy cross and follow Me." "Deny thyself and follow Me." There never were demands more exacting than the demands made by Jesus Christ on His followers. And yet He tells us that His yoke is easy, and His burden is light. Can it be true? Yes, blessed be God, it is true, absolutely true. But everything depends on the relation of the soul to Christ. The yoke of Christ to the man who has not the spirit of Christ, must necessarily be an intolerable burden; but to the man who has the spirit of Christ, and whose soul is strengthened by the love of Christ, it is, as some one has said, like the plumage of a bird, an easy weight, enabling the soul to soar upwards and heavenwards. When we take this yoke upon us the very spirit of Christ is implanted in us, and Christ's spirit, dwelling in us as a mighty power, enables us to realise that His yoke is easy, and His burden is light.

Jesus Christ the Giver of rest. This is the subject to which I wish to call your attention at this time. Is there true rest to be found in Jesus Christ? How does He give rest to the soul? Has He given *us* rest? Does He give us rest *now?* If so, how? This is a question of vital importance. I will try and answer it from my own personal experience. Jesus Christ reveals God; Jesus Christ, as the Revealer of God, gives me rest.

That is the sum of what I have to say on this occasion.

And first, Jesus Christ gives me rest by His revelation of God as Father. This great word was ever on the lips of our Lord. When a boy of twelve He spoke of His Father's house; and at the close of life, He spoke of Himself as going to the Father, and His last words on the cross were, "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit." In the Old Testament God is revealed as Creator, as Jehovah, as God Almighty; but not as Father. The *word* is there, but the *revelation* is not there; the depth of meaning is not there. It was Jesus Christ who gave the world this great name. It is He who has taught us to say "Our Father." It is only as we live in union with Christ and absorb His spirit that this great name becomes a living name to us. But once it does become a living name to us, once it does become a reality to us, life assumes a new aspect, and its varied experiences become clothed with a new meaning. Realising that God is my Father, life is no longer a mere playground, but a school; the grand aim of life is no longer mere pleasure, but education and progress; and the trials of life are no longer meaningless hopes and accidents, but gracious discipline, measured by the Father's love and the child's need. Let this conviction sink deep into the soul, and spiritual rest must follow. The spirit will become calm, patient, restful. The brightest day in a man's life is the day on which the revelation of God as Father becomes a reality to the soul. Is God my Father? Then I know that He will never leave me, and that He can never forsake me. Is God my Father? Then I know that there is no poison in the

cup which He gives me to drink. It may be bitter, very bitter; but there is no poison in it, there is nothing in it to hurt me. Is God my Father? Then, though nailed to a cross, I *can* trust Him, and *will* trust Him. "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit." Such was His trust in God on His cross; and such shall be my trust in God on my cross. Jesus as the perfect Son reveals the perfect Father. He knew the Father perfectly, and trusted Him implicitly. He did so with regard to Himself personally, and He did so with regard to His mission and work. If He believed, why should I doubt? If He trusted in God, why should I hesitate to put my whole trust and confidence in Him?

Jesus Christ gives me rest by His revelation of God as love. By some God is looked upon as a vindictive Tyrant, delighting more in the condemnation of men than in their salvation. He is looked upon as a Being of infinite power, severely strict, and exclusively concerned about His own honour and dignity. In the minds of many, a sort of antagonism is set up between God and Christ. There, on the one hand, is the burning wrath of God, and there, on the other hand, is the quenching love of Christ. There is, I am told, in one of the Continental galleries, a picture which depicts God as shooting arrows at men, and Christ catching them and breaking them before they struck. I have not seen that picture, but many a sermon did I hear in my boyhood of the theology of which that picture might be taken as a faithful representation—God angry and threatening; Christ pitiful and appeasing. What a hideous picture of God! And yet it was the picture that was hung up in most of the sermons I listened to in my early days. And what was

the effect of that preaching on me in those days? It was this: It made me take sides with Christ against God. It drew my heart to Christ in grateful affection; whilst it created within my breast a strange sense of dread and alienation as the thought of God presented itself to my mind. I loved the Son, but feared the Father. That horrible picture lurked in my mind for many years; and it lurks in the minds of many Christians to-day. To the imagination of many, God is a Being to be feared and shunned, and religious duties are felt by them to be sacrifices and burdens. The thought of God, which ought to bring joy and confidence to the soul, brings nothing to them but pain and dark forebodings.

Now, Jesus Christ came to deliver us from all that, and He does so by declaring and manifesting the love of God. "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son." That is a wonderful declaration. Let us beware of toning it down by substituting words of our own for the words of Christ. Don't say God *pities* the world; Jesus Christ did not say that. God did pity the world; but He did more, He *loved* the world. Love is a greater word than the word pity. Let us cling to that word, for the whole Gospel is in it. Don't say God so loved the chosen few, and that He gave His only begotten Son for them, and for them only. Jesus Christ did not say that. What right have we to say that? Don't say that Jesus Christ came to create love in the heart of God, that He came to appease an angry and offended God by the sacrifice of Himself. That is not what Jesus said, but the very reverse of what He said. The only begotten Son came from the bosom of the Father to tell men what God is, and this is what He tells us: "God so *loved* the

world that He gave His only begotten Son that *whosoever* believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." God and Christ are one. The works of Christ were the works of God. The love of Christ was the love of God. The cross is a manifestation and a proof, not of Christ's love only, but of the Father's love also. "He who hath seen Me hath seen the Father." "I am in the Father, and the Father in Me." "The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of Myself; but the Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works."

"God is love." How did the apostle make that grand discovery? Not by gazing on nature. There is much in nature that cannot be easily reconciled with the declaration that God is love. Not by reading history. Many of the facts of history seem to go right against the assumption that God is love. Not by reading the scriptures of the Old Testament even. You cannot read the Old Testament without discovering that there is love in God; but nowhere in the Old Testament is God revealed as love. Where and how did the apostle learn this sublime truth concerning God? He learnt it in the school of Christ. Apart from Christ, he could never have discovered it. Apart from Christ, he could never have given utterance to it. It was whilst gazing on the face of the only begotten Son that this momentous truth became manifest to the spiritual vision of the apostle. "We beheld His glory, glory as the only begotten of the Father." "No man hath seen God at any time." Yet we know God, we know that God is love. How do we know it? Because the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, hath declared Him. "God is love." That is the declaration.

But if God is love, then we are sure that there is no malice in God, no malignity, no selfishness, no unrighteousness. There is anger in God; but it is anger against sin and wrong. It is righteous anger; it is holy displeasure at sin. God is a consuming fire to all that is wrong in me, and I bless His Holy Name for that, but His heart towards *me* is a heart of love. Let this conviction sink deep down into my soul, and soul-rest must follow. God will no longer be looked upon as an object to be shunned and mistrusted, but to be loved with the heart's best and strongest love, to be reverenced with the soul's deepest reverence, and to be trusted with unquestioning faith. "God is love." That is one of the great truths concerning God revealed by Jesus Christ; it is also one of the most important lessons with regard to God which we can possibly learn. No one can come to Christ and learn this lesson at His feet without finding that it does bring *rest, true* rest to the soul.

Jesus Christ gives me rest by His revelation of God as the sin-forgiving God. The revelation of God as Father brings rest to the soul; the revelation of God as love does the same. But I feel the need of a further revelation. I am a sinner; and I know by painful experience that sin is the most terrible of all burdens. It is the sense of sin that gives pressure and galling force to every other burden. Now, Jesus Christ gives us rest from this burden; and He does so, not by teaching us to regard sin as a thing of no importance, a mere trifle, but the very reverse. We never knew the real meaning of sin, never realised what a bitter thing it is, till we entered the school of Christ, and began to learn of Him. It is the man who has the deepest knowledge of Christ, that has

the deepest insight into his own heart, and the man who has the deepest insight into his own heart is the man who has the deepest insight into the heart of sin. But whilst Christ does, on the one hand, give the soul a keener sense of sin, He does, on the other hand, give the peace and the rest which a sense of forgiveness brings with it. And this He does by revealing God as the sin-forgiving God, and the sacrifice of Himself as the ground of the Divine forgiveness. "The Son of man came to give His life a *ransom* for many." "This is the blood of the covenant which is shed for many unto the remission of sin." Some will tell you that you cannot find the Atonement in the teachings of our Lord. I venture to say that you have the whole truth in these two passages. With these two passages before me, I feel that I can say with the Apostle, "He loved *me*, and gave Himself for *me*." His blood was shed for the remission of *my* sins. Being justified by faith, I have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Some say that they can do without the Atonement. Well, I judge no man, but I am free to confess that I cannot do without it.

> "This is the rock on which I stand,
> All other ground is sinking sand."

The Atonement is a *fact*, forgiveness is a fact, and this fact rests on that fact. Take *that* away, and *this* must fall to the ground. I have no theory of the Atonement to propound. I have never come across a theory that satisfies my own mind. But I believe in the *fact*, and, resting the whole weight of my soul on the *fact*, I have peace with God. Jesus Christ on the cross took my place, the just for the unjust. In some mysterious sense, He

bore my sins and set me free. "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth from *all* sin." I believe that, and believing that, I have peace, I have rest of soul.

Jesus Christ gives me rest by His revelation of God as the Divine sanctifier and helper. Sin is a tyrant; it is the great enemy of the soul. I need deliverance, not only from the doom of sin, but from its power and dominion also. As long as man is under the dominion of sin, he cannot be at rest. The soul, whilst under the power of one sinful passion, must be torn, distracted, tormented. As long as the demon of pride, envy, jealousy, malice, lust, selfishness, or any such demon, holds the sway over us, we shall never know what soul-rest is. Let us take that for granted. The sooner we do take it for granted the better it will be for us all. For the lascivious man, for the unclean man, for the intemperate man, there can be no rest; neither can there be for the proud man, the envious man, the jealous man, the bad-tempered man, the faithless man. But can Jesus Christ give me rest from these demons? Can He give me the victory over these *inward* sins? Can he deliver me from such sins as envy, jealousy, and pride? What about this ungovernable temper of mine? What about these brain-storms, which make me feel more like a man possessed than a man in his right mind? Can Jesus Christ cast out this bad temper? Can He quell these storms? Do you mean to say that Jesus Christ can do all this for me? Yes, my friend, that is precisely what I mean to say. Jesus Christ is a full Saviour, and I am here to preach a full salvation. Jesus Christ, by His revelation of God the Holy Ghost, as the sanctifier and helper, meets this need of the soul. The Holy Spirit

does not only convince men of sin, He breaks the *power* of sin, and casts it out. He cleanses the heart and fills it with love—love to God, and love to man. This casting out of sin, and the enthroning of love, brings rest to the soul.

"Walk by the Spirit," says Paul, "and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh." "Now the works of the flesh are these: Fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousies, wraths, factions, divisions, heresies, envyings, drunkenness, revellings, and such like." Think of a soul being under the dominion of these lusts, or under the dominion of any one of these lusts! What rest, what peace can there be to that poor soul? Now look at the man who is under the dominion of the Spirit. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, temperance." Such are the fruits produced by the in-dwelling of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of men. Where these are there is rest, true rest, heavenly rest. "Come unto Me, and I will give you rest." Come unto Me, be united to Me, dwell in Me, and the Holy Spirit, as the Divine sanctifier and helper, will take up His abode in your soul, and fill it with his own power, purity, and peace.

Jesus Christ gives me rest by His revelation of the Father as Supreme Lord, and by giving me the blessed assurance that, under His paternal rule, all things must work together for good. "O Father, Lord of heaven and earth." It is not easy to believe at all times and in all circumstances that all things must work together for good. Can this heavy loss be for my good? Can this sore bereavement be for my good? Can these

disappointments in life be for my good? Can it be that this black cloud which I so much dread is full of *blessing* for me? Impossible! Impossible! Such is the language of sight. Apart from Christ, that is the only answer we could give to these questions, and to all such questions as these. The mystery of suffering, apart from Christ, baffles us, and tends sometimes to madden us. But Christ Jesus, by His teachings, by His life, by His death, and by His presence in us, enables us to face the mystery with calmness. He may not in any case make it plain to the understanding, but He does give rest and peace to the soul. He gives us the blessed assurance that the Father is over *all*, that under His paternal rule *all* must be right, that *all* must work together for good to every one of His children; and thus He enables the heart to bear the mystery with calmness. He enables us to trust where we cannot see. He enables us to trust in the darkest night, to trust in the fiercest storm, to trust on to the end.

I was reading some years ago a story about Robert Louis Stevenson's grandfather, which interested me very much. He was upon a drifting ship, on a lee shore, on a stormy night. He could hear the surf upon the breakers, and it seemed as if all must be soon over. Stevenson went on deck, and he found only one person there. Lashed to the helm the pilot stood, turning the vessel away from destruction inch by inch, but doing it. As Stevenson came on deck the pilot turned and smiled upon him. He went below, and said to himself, "It's all right; it will be all right in the morning. I have seen the pilot's face, and the pilot smiled." Brothers and sisters, the bark of our life is being guided by our

Father; the helm is in our Father's hand. It will be all right in the morning. Nay, it is all right *now*. Jesus has given us to see the Pilot's face, and the Pilot smiles.

> "Though faith and hope awhile be tried,
> I ask not, need not, ought beside;
> How safe, how calm, how satisfied
> The soul that clings to Thee!"

That clings to Thee! Clings to Thee in the dark! Clings to Thee in spite of the darkness! Clings to Thee to the end!

And, lastly, Christ gives me rest by His revelation of God as the Giver of Everlasting Life, and thus inspiring my soul with a glorious hope. "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son." "I go and prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I come again, and will receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also." That is the great hope with which Jesus Christ inspires the soul. It is the hope of eternal life; it is the hope of seeing Him, of being forever with Him, and of sharing with Him in His eternal glory. We are indebted to Jesus Christ for this blessed hope. It is He who has brought life and immortality to light. The truth is in the Old Testament; but it is not brought to *light* even in that wonderful Book. Jesus Christ has brought it to light. He has made it certain that death does not end all. He did not only die; He rose again and ascended into heaven. And this is not all. He will come again and take us to Himself. "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with Him in glory." What a beautiful vision of heaven

have we here! We have all had our visions of heaven. I have had mine. There were the visions of my childhood, very beautiful and very satisfying at the time; but they have passed away. There were the visions of my boyhood, also very beautiful and very satisfying at the time; and they have passed away. And many a vision of heaven, and many a theory of heaven have I had since; but they have all vanished one by one. And now, in my old age, there is just one vision of heaven that remains with me as a permanent possession, and I find it abundantly satisfying. Where is heaven? Where Christ is. In what does heaven consist? In being with Christ, in being like Christ, and in sharing with Christ in His eternal glory. I want nothing more. That satisfies my intellect; it satisfies my heart. Having this, I can take everything else for granted. The man who has this great hope filling his breast will not succumb under the trials of life. He will not allow the burdens of life to crush him; he will not allow the storms of life to terrify him. The tempest may rage fiercely and long, but the inward calm remains unbroken. His real home is in heaven, and he knows that no earth-born storm can rob him of the *sweet* rest, the perfect rest, the *eternal* rest that awaits him there.

And as for death, it is to him a vanquished foe. It is to him the mere entrance gate to the life immortal.

> "'Tis the entrance to our home;
> 'Tis the passage to that God,
> Who bids His children come,
> When this weary course is trod.
> Such is death, such is death."

Yes, such is death as realised by the believers, *in* and

through Jesus Christ His Lord. "Thanks be to God, Who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

"Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." What a glorious Gospel to preach to men. Christ, the Son of God! Christ, the revealer of God! Christ, the giver of rest! It is the very message men need. It is the message the Chinese need. The great need of China to-day is Jesus Christ, and the great need of China is the great need of the world. The man who can preach this Gospel with the clearness, the emphasis, and the authority which spring from an inward experience of its truth, will not fail to touch the hearts of his fellow men. We value knowledge of every kind. But, oh! how poor and paltry every other appears to be, when compared with the knowledge of God in Jesus Christ. I have seen it stated that Lord Kelvin, a very prince in science, as you all know, was asked what he considered the greatest discovery he had ever made, and that his reply was: "I think my greatest discovery was to discover my Saviour in Jesus Christ." That, dear friends, is the greatest discovery possible to man. Have *we* made it? Have we *all* made it?

A word in conclusion. Some of us have come to Jesus Christ, and have found in Him true rest of soul. In so far as we have this soul-rest at all, we are indebted to Him for it. But is the rest we have found in Him perfect? Does it satisfy the soul? Perhaps not. Probably not. Such as it is, we would not part with it for all the wealth of the world. But it is not complete. Why not? Is it not because our faith is defective? Or is it not because there is something lacking in our consecration? Or is it

not because these wills of ours are not fully surrendered to the power of Christ? Perfect faith, perfect consecration, and perfect surrender must bring perfect rest to the soul. When these are wholly wanting, there can be no rest at all; where they are partly wanting, the rest must be incomplete. If we do not enjoy *complete* rest of soul, it is not because Christ has failed us; it is not because He has broken His promise; neither is it because He has promised what He cannot give. The fault is ours, entirely ours, not His.

"Sometimes I catch sweet glimpses of His face,
But that is all;
Sometimes He speaks a passing word of peace,
But that is all.
Sometimes I think I hear His loving voice
Upon me call.
And is this all He meant when thus He spoke,
'Come unto Me'?
Is there no deeper, more enduring, rest in Him?
In Him for thee?
Is there no steadier light for thee in Him?
Oh, come and see!"

Let us, then, once more come to Him; and let us do so in the spirit of implicit faith, perfect consecration, and entire surrender, and thus find in Him the perfect rest which He *can* give, and which we so much need.

One word more. There may be some among us who have never come to Christ at all, who know absolutely nothing of Him as the Giver of rest, who know nothing by experience of the soul-rest of which I have just been speaking. You have never realised that God is your Father. You have never realised that God is love. You have never known God as the sin-forgiving God. The

slavish dread of God is still upon you, and you are still a stranger to the blessedness of forgiveness. Sin is still your master, and you are not at peace with God or with yourself. The trials of life crush you, the thought of death terrifies you, and you have to confess to yourself that this wonderful soul-rest is not yours. Am I describing the spiritual condition of anyone in this congregation? I do not know. It may be that I am; and this being the case, I cannot close without reminding all such that Jesus Christ is here to-day, standing in our very midst, and tenderly saying, "Come!" And let me remind you that Jesus, and Jesus alone, can give you this soul-rest. The world—its wealth, its pleasures, its pomp, its splendours—cannot give it. Theology cannot give it. The Church cannot give it. The ordinances of the Church cannot give it, even the Bible cannot give it. Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ alone, can give you this blessed rest. It is only as the soul comes into vital union with the personal Christ, the living Christ, that it can enter into the peace of God which passeth all understanding.

"Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." So did the Saviour speak in Palestine nearly 1,900 years ago, and so does He speak here to-day. Shall He speak in vain? God forbid. May the language of every heart be:

"Just as I am, without one plea,
But that Thy blood was shed for me,
And that Thou bid'st me come to Thee,
O Lamb of God, I come.

Just as I am—Thy love unknown,
Has broken every barrier down.
Now to be Thine, yea, Thine alone,
O Lamb of God, I come."

VI

THE MISSIONARY

"By the grace of God I am what I am."—1 CORINTHIANS XV. 10.

LET me speak of the secret of Paul's success as a missionary. I will not speak of the apostle's methods of working, but of the spirit which animated him in all his work. Methods will vary with the man and the times. But the spirit ought to be one and the same in the case of all men and in all ages. I may observe in passing, however, that the apostle's methods were of the simplest description. There was very little machinery of any kind about his plan of carrying on his mission. So absorbed was he in the purely spiritual department of his work, that he seems to have had but little time to devote to matters mainly ecclesiastical and external. Let us learn from this fact the importance of exercising the utmost toleration with regard to plans and methods.

Neither will I speak of the apostle's natural endowments and mental culture. That he was by nature and education wonderfully fitted for the work which God had given him to do we all know; and we know also that this special fitness had much to do with his great success. I am a strong believer in this kind of fitness. There is the fitness of Williams for the South Seas; of Moffat for Africa; of Carey for India; of Judson for Burmah; and of

Morrison for China. These great men were not only made to be missionaries, they were made to be missionaries in the very spheres to which they are called, and in which they laboured. God can use us all, but the man who can do most good for Him, if endued with power from on high, is the man possessed of this special fitness.

But I will not dwell on this kind of fitness now. Though of great value, and highly desirable, it is not within the reach of all. There is, however, a fitness possible to every missionary, and which every missionary must have if he would carry on his work rightly and successfully. This is spiritual fitness, and it is of this I wish to speak at this time. Let me speak of the apostle's success, looking upon the man and his work from a spiritual point of view. What was the secret of Paul's success?

I. I would mention, first, the fact that Paul had a *vision* of Christ. "The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know His will and *see* that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of His mouth. For thou shalt be His witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard." Without this vision of Christ the apostle could not have been the man he was, nor the missionary he was. It was this vision of Christ that turned the blasphemer into a believer, the persecutor into a preacher. The moment the Nazarene revealed Himself to Paul as the Son of God, that moment he became as devotedly attached to Him, and as zealous in promoting the interest of His Church, as he had been in seeking its destruction. From that moment Christ became a great and glorious reality to Paul. Not only

did the vision transform the man; it clothed him with Divine power. It took away all his doubts, and made him the greatest witness for Christ the world has ever known.

Now a vision of Christ is possible to every missionary. There is a moment in the life of every earnest believer, of every true servant of God, when Jesus Christ becomes the greatest of all realities to the soul. The impression made on the soul is such that it can never be mistaken for anything else than a direct manifestation of Jesus Christ. This vision may come earlier, or it may come later; but come it must if we would be Christ's witnesses unto men.

In this age a vision of Christ is specially necessary. Is Jesus *one* among the many, or is He *the* one? That is a question often asked these days. The man who has had a vision of Christ as the Son of God and the Saviour of the World can never have any doubt on this point. To classify Christ with Zoroaster, Buddha, Confucius, Socrates, or any other of the world's sages, would have been shocking to the apostle Paul; and it cannot but be shocking to everyone who has had a real vision of Christ. "Have I not *seen* Jesus Christ our Lord? Did I not behold His glory? Have I not heard the voice of His mouth?" I have *seen*, I have *heard*, I *know*. I am a *witness* of what I have seen, and heard, and know. This is a point on which Paul had no doubt; and it is a point on which the missionary cannot afford to have a doubt.

II. Paul had an unwavering faith in Christ as an omnipotent Saviour, based on a positive assurance with regard to his own personal salvation. "Whereunto I was appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher.

For the which cause I suffer also these things; yet I am not ashamed, for I know Him whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that He is able to guard that which I have committed unto Him against that day." Paul knew that he was a saved man. He had no anxiety about his own personal salvation. In no letter of his can we detect the faintest trace of a doubt on this point:

> "'Tis a point I long to know,
> Oft it causes anxious thought;
> Do I love the Lord or no?
> Am I His, or am I not?"

You cannot imagine Paul singing that. Doubt as to whether he was Christ's or Christ was his would have weakened his whole life. On this point, however, he had no doubt whatever. This assurance with regard to his personal salvation brought strength to his soul. It clothed him with Divine energy and boldness, and made him a perfectly fearless man. "I am not ashamed." Why? "I *know* whom I have believed."

It also set him at liberty to devote his time and energies to the salvation of others. As long as a man is anxious about his own safety, he will find it difficult to give undivided attention to the salvation of his fellow men.

It also enabled him to preach a full salvation from personal experience, and consequently preach with emphasis and power. He knew that he himself was a saved man, and that Jesus Christ was his Saviour. Having himself been saved by Christ, it was impossible for him to doubt Christ's power to save. Jesus has saved *me*, the chief of sinners. Having saved *me*, He

must be mighty to save. If he has saved *me*, He can save *you*, He can save *all*. He can save to the uttermost all who come unto God by Him. This is the kind of preaching that carries conviction with it; the kind of preaching to which the hearts of men will respond. The man who can, from his own personal experience, bear testimony to Christ's power to save, is a man that will be listened to. It is well to preach from the Book; we must preach from the Book; we cannot do without the Book. But let us not forget that the value of the preaching will greatly depend upon the living testimony of the preacher's own experience. Behind the Book you must have the saved man. Without this the preaching, no matter how learned, no matter how eloquent, will lack the ring of conviction, and will fall powerless on the ears of men. Paul was a saved man, and he *knew* it. He had an unwavering faith in Jesus Christ as an omnipotent Saviour, based on a positive assurance with regard to his own personal salvation; and herein we have one of the main causes to which his success as a preacher and an apostle is to be ascribed.

III. Paul knew that he was Divinely called, Divinely appointed to the work to which he was devoting his life. "Arise, and stand upon thy feet, for to this end have I appeared unto thee, to appoint thee a minister and a witness both of the things wherein thou hast seen me, and the things wherein I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom I send thee, to open their eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God." Thus spoke the risen Lord to Paul. Having heard this voice from heaven, he could speak of

himself with the utmost confidence as one called to be an apostle, and as separated unto the Gospel of God. "It pleased God, who called me by His grace, to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him." Moreover, he tells us that necessity was laid upon him. "Yea," he adds, "woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel." This reminds us of one of Carey's memorable sayings: "*I could not turn back without guilt on my soul.*"

It has been remarked that there was a magnificent self-consciousness about the apostle Paul. And so there was. He knew the truth about himself. He *knew* that a vision of Christ had been granted to him; he *knew* that he had been saved by Jesus Christ; he *knew* that he had been called by Jesus Christ to be an apostle and definitely separated unto the Gospel of God. On all these points there was undoubtedly a magnificent self-consciousness about the apostle Paul.

Now, this consciousness of a definite call to the work is a matter of no little importance. There is a tendency these days to make quantity and not quality the main consideration, and to thrust men into the mission field irrespective of any sense on their part of a special call to the work. "Unless you can give a reason why you should stay at home, it is your duty to go abroad." Is that a sound maxim? If a man told me that he could give *no* reason for staying at home, I should feel much inclined to tell him that that was one good reason why he should *not* go abroad. That is not the stamp of man the mission field needs. That maxim may bring a man into the field, but will it keep him there? Will it enable him to stand the trials incident to the missionary life, and never look back? Will it enable him to

discharge the duties of this high calling with steady perseverance and never-flagging zeal, in spite of the allurements of the world, the weakness of the flesh, and the temptations of the devil? When called upon to make a great sacrifice for the cause, will it enable him to take up the Cross and follow the Master? Nothing but an unmistakable sense of a Divine call to the work will enable the missionary to endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ, and persevere unto the end. Paul was a born missionary, and I believe in the born missionary as I do the born poet. You cannot manufacture the one, neither can you manufacture the other. God *made* him to be a missionary, and he knew it. And his knowledge of the facts had much to do with making him the missionary he was—*the greatest missionary the world has ever seen.*

IV. Paul had an exalted sense of the honour and dignity of his mission. He was proud of his position as a servant of Christ, and as a servant of Christ to the Gentiles. "I speak to you that are Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle of the Gentiles, I glorify my ministry." This led, in his case, to a life of entire devotion to Jesus Christ as his Lord and Master, and of self-denying service on behalf of the Gentiles. The missionary life was regarded by him as a glorious life, whether looked upon in its relation to the Christ who sent him, or to the people to whom he was sent, and this will account in a great measure for his wonderful success. And so it must be with his successors, if they would realise the success possible to them as messengers of Christ to the various peoples to whom they are sent. On their position as servants of Christ I need not dwell. If they are Christians

at all they cannot but be proud of their Leader. They know that they are serving a glorious Master. They are not ashamed of their Lord. But what about the people to whom they are sent? Let me speak of China and the Chinese. The missionaries in China have every reason to be proud of their position as ambassadors of Christ to that great people. It is not necessary to dwell on this point. There is a point, however, worthy of attention, namely, the importance of cherishing kindly and respectful sentiments towards the Chinese people. It is one thing to cherish lofty views of the vastness of the Chinese population and the grandeur of the Chinese Empire; it is quite another thing, in daily intercourse with the people, to feel towards them as one ought to feel, and act towards them as one ought to act. The missionary may not find it as easy as he could wish to be all that he ought to be in this respect. If it be so, he would do well to bear in mind that his difficulty with regard to the matter cannot be greater than that which the apostle had to face. Paul was a Jew, and as such had been brought up to look upon a "single Israelite as of more value in the sight of God than all the nations of the world." In the book of Esdras, the Jew addresses God thus: "On our account hast Thou created the world. Other nations, sprung from Adam, Thou hast said are nothing, and are like spittle; and Thou hast likened these multitudes to the droppings from a cask. But we are Thy people whom Thou hast called, Thy first-born, Thine only-begotten, Thy well-beloved." Now all this race pride, race prejudice, race antipathy, race hatred, was deeply rooted in the heart of Paul, and had to be overcome. And nobly did he overcome it; nay more

than overcome it, through the Christ who lived and triumphed in him. From being a despiser and a hater of the Gentiles, he was converted into an ardent lover and devoted apostle of the Gentiles. "Inasmuch as I am an apostle of the Gentiles, I glorify my ministry." This should be the attitude of every missionary towards the people to whom he is sent. He ought to treat them with genuine respect and affection. When he speaks of them, he ought to speak kindly and respectfully. By all means let him pity them; but let him not be ever telling them that he pities them. Let him cherish the pity in his heart, and show it in deeds of loving-kindness and good-will. The doctrine of the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man is a beautiful doctrine to preach. But, as with many doctrines, it is much easier to preach it than to live it. The great apostle did both. He preached it and he lived it, and hence his wonderful success as an apostle to the Gentiles. His successors in China, in Judea, and in every part of the heathen world, must do the same, if they would succeed in their attempt to make an impression of Christ on the hearts of the people among whom they labour, and lead them through Christ into the saving knowledge of the Father and His love.

V. Paul had a deep sense of the solemnity of his ministry. "We are a sweet savour of Christ unto God, in them that are being saved, and in them that are perishing; to the one a savour from death unto death; to the other a savour from life unto life. And Who is sufficient for these things." Here you have Paul's view of the tremendous importance of his ministry, whether regarded in its relation to the saved or to the lost. His

views of the value of the human soul, of the heinousness of sin, and of the greatness of the redemption wrought by Jesus Christ, filled his soul with solemn awe as he thought of the men and women by whom he was surrounded. "Knowing then the fear of the Lord, we persuade men." "We are ambassadors, therefore, on behalf of Christ, as though God were intreating by us: we beseech you on behalf of Christ, be ye reconciled to God." What earnestness, what a solemn view of life, and what a keen sense of responsibility with regard to the salvation of men do these words reveal! "Life," said Horace Walpole, "is a comedy to those who think, and a tragedy to those who feel." To a laughing Democritus, life is a comedy; to a weeping Heraclitus, life is a tragedy. In China you have both. There is much there to make you laugh, and there is much to make you weep. To Abbé Huc, life in China seems to have been little else than a comedy. The first time I read his "Chinese Empire," I found it extremely difficult to control my risible faculty. When I closed the book the people of China appeared to my imagination supremely ludicrous. Now, that is a state of mind in which the missionary will find it very difficult to work for Christ. Do not suppose that I would have the missionary pose as a weeping philosopher, and go about with a long face and a down-cast look. The missionary needs be a man of strong faith, ardent hope, and burning love. The joy of the Lord should shine forth in his countenance, ring in his voice, and quicken his footsteps, He should be the brightest and happiest of men. Nevertheless, if he is not penetrated with a deep sense of the solemnity of his ministry, his preaching and

teaching will be of little use. His life will be devoid of intensity and earnestness, and his words will lack the ring of reality, without which they must fail to move the hearts of men. The great apostle carried into his work a deep sense of the solemnity of his ministry, and hence the intense earnestness of the man, and the marked success which accompanied his apostolic labours.

VI. Paul was deeply impressed with the transcendent value of the Gospel as God's *one* great remedy for the world's sins and sorrows. "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." "I determined to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ and Him Crucified." He shunned not to declare the whole counsel of God—His whole counsel of redemption and grace. The gospel, the whole gospel, and nothing but the gospel! That was Paul's motto. The Gospel to Paul was not one among the many, but *the* one; it was not a compound of Jewish and Grecian elements, not a product of the faiths of the world, but a new force which had come down from heaven itself, fresh from the hand of God. To him the Gospel was not only *power*, but *the* power, the power of *God*, and the power of God unto *salvation*. He knew no other, neither did he feel the need of any other.

The science of comparative religion is a very fascinating study, and, rightly handled, a very helpful study also. No missionary in these days can afford to pass it by as altogether outside his legitimate sphere of thought, or as unworthy of his attention. Nevertheless it has its dangers, dangers against which the missionary must be on his guard if he would be faithful to his calling as a minister of Christ, and earnestly contend for the faith

once for all delivered unto the saints. The Gospel must ever be to him what it was to Paul, God's *one* message of salvation to a sinful world, if he would not lose all power and influence as an ambassador of Christ.

Salvation *in Christ*. Salvation in Christ *alone*. Salvation in *no other*. That was Paul's gospel—a gospel in which he believed with all his heart, and preached with irrepressible energy. Can you tell me how much the great apostle's success is to be ascribed to his firm grip of this vital truth? What would Paul have been without this superb faith in his message? What trials could he have endured? What work could he have accomplished? Am I not safe in saying that, as a servant of Jesus Christ, his life would have been a pitiful failure?

VII. Paul had a deep sense of his union and oneness with Christ. "I have been crucified with Christ yet I live; and yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me." Here we have Paul's doctrine of the mystical union of Christ and the believer. "I have been crucified with Christ." My old life, under the influence of the cross of Christ, has perished. "Yet I live." My crucifixion has been followed by a resurrection. "Yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me." This new life has not had its origin in me. It is not I at all, but Christ, who has taken possession of me, is actually living in me. Christ, the crucified and risen Redeemer, Who is the resurrection and the life, has become the indwelling, animating, and controlling principle of my life. All this was a great reality to the apostle. With him it was not a theory, but a conscious experience which filled his soul with Divine strength. "I can do all things *in* Christ who

strengtheneth me." In Christ, I can do all things. Though utterly weak and helpless in myself, I am omnipotent *in* Him. "For me to live is Christ." Life to me is but another name for Christ. I live Christ. I live *in* Christ and *for* Christ. My life has its root *in* Christ, and is devoted *to* Christ. Paul lived in vital union with Christ, and hence his Christ-like character; and hence also his might as a preacher, and his success as a missionary. And the missionaries of to-day must do the same if they would be mighty before God to the casting down of strongholds. In Christ they can do all things; apart from Christ, they can do nothing, absolutely nothing.

VIII. Think again of Paul's love for the converts. How true and passionate it was! He felt his oneness, not only with Christ, but with his brethren in Christ also. His walk with God was close, and his walk with his own children in the faith was close too. Writing to the Christians at Corinth he could say with the utmost sincerity that they were in his heart, and that he loved them with an enduring affection. "Ye are in our hearts, to die together and to live together." That is, he was ready to *die* with them and for them, or to *live* with them and for them. He wished to assure them that whether he lived or died they would be always in his heart. "Ye are our Epistles written in (or on) our hearts." There you have another expression of deep and ardent love. Paul's Epistles abound in expressions such as these; and they all go to show how closely he identified himself with the converts, with what warmth of affection he loved them, and how ready he was to make great sacrifices on their behalf. And he was all this to them,

not because they were faultless, but in spite of their many weaknesses and imperfections. And every missionary must have this love for the converts, must have this sense of oneness with them, if he would be a missionary *indeed*, if he would win their confidence and affection, and see his efforts on their behalf crowned with success. He must learn to love them in spite of much that may appear loveless in them. The missionary must have more than a tremendous conscience in dealing with his converts; he must have a big heart and deep human sympathies. He must have the quenchless love of Christ.

IX. And look for a moment at the self-denying love, the spirit of self-sacrifice, which the great apostle carried with him into all his work. He was ever ready to sacrifice self and all for the good of others. "I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, that I have great sorrow, and unceasing pain in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were anathema from Christ, for my brethren's sake, my kinsmen according to the flesh." What a wonderful burst of holy emotion! Let us not try and explain it away, and make it mean nothing. Let us not apply to it our cold criticism. To my mind it is a genuine expression of the absorption of Paul's entire being in the salvation of his own people.

Writing to the Philippians, the apostle says: "But I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better; yet to abide in the flesh is more needful for your sake. And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide with you all, for your progress and joy in faith." Here we have a

beautiful instance of self-denying love. I *desire* to depart; to depart and be with Christ would be far better so far as I am concerned; but so far as you are concerned, it is better that I should remain. And this being the case, I am willing to abide, and desire to abide, though I know well that to abide must bring to me hard toil and much suffering.

"Wherefore, if meat maketh my brother stumble, I will eat no flesh for evermore, that I make not my brother stumble." Let the missionary take that in the spirit of it, and he will learn a lesson in self-denying love that will be of life-long value to him.

He who would be a true missionary, and a successful missionary, must have this self-denying love filling his heart, and controlling his life. He must be willing to sacrifice ease, comfort, time, taste, and many other things, to which he may attach much value, for the sake of those whose spiritual interests have been committed to his charge. He must study their weaknesses and compassionate their failings, if he would help them to develop in character and grow strong in the Christian life. With Paul he must be ready to make himself all things to all men, that he may save some.

X. And, lastly, Paul carried with him into his work a soul nobly free from all jealousy, all envy, and all unholy rivalry. Paul had his ambitions, and noble ambitions they were. Let me give one or two examples of Paul's ambitions. "One thing I do, forgetting the things that are behind, and stretching forward to the things which are before, I press on toward the goal, unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." That was a grand ambition. "But I hold not my life of

any account, as dear unto myself, so that I may accomplish my course, and the ministry which I received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the Gospel of the grace of God." That was another of his grand ambitions. "From Jerusalem even unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the Gospel of Christ; yea making it my aim so to preach the Gospel, not where Christ was already named, that I might not build on another man's foundation." That was a fine ambition. Would that all the societies and all the missionaries had more of it.

Paul was a very ambitious man; but his ambitions were all in the right direction, they were all of the right sort. But though ambitious, he was nobly free from jealousy. The spirit of unholy rivalry had no place in his breast. Even with regard to those who preached the Gospel out of rivalry to himself, he could say: "What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretence or in truth, Christ is proclaimed; and therein I do rejoice; yea, and will rejoice." What a lesson we have here with regard to the spirit in which we, whether as individuals or as missions, should carry on our work! Jealousy and unholy rivalry ought to have no place in the missionary enterprise. Jealousy has been called the "ugliest fiend of hell." Ugly it is; ugly everywhere. But nowhere does it appear so ugly as on the mission field, and nowhere is its venom so deadly. "From all jealousy, and from all unholy rivalry, may the good Lord deliver us." That is a prayer which the missionaries cannot offer up too often or too earnestly.

Such was the apostle Paul. He was a great man, a noble servant of Jesus Christ, the grandest missionary the Christian Church can boast of. He was unquestion-

ably the prince of missionaries; and where is the missionary who does not keep him steadily before his eyes as the model missionary, and draw daily inspiration from his incomparable life! He was wonderfully successful, and we have just touched on the secret of his success. May God help us to learn the secret well. Paul's success did not depend on any adventitious circumstances, neither does ours. Let us remember that our efficiency does not depend upon the houses in which we live, the clothes we wear, and the food we eat. Neither does it depend on the little plans and methods we adopt. It depends on something far higher, far more essential, far more inward and vital than these things and such things as these. It depends on the Spirit which dwells in us and breathes through us. It depends on the spiritual atmosphere in which we live, move, and have our being. It depends on our possessing the *spiritual* fitness of which I have just been speaking, and which the apostle Paul possessed in such an eminent degree. It is this fitness that made Paul the man he was, and the apostle he was; and it is this fitness that will make us the men and the apostles we should be.

"By the grace of God I am what I am."

May God lead us into a deeper knowledge of His Son Jesus Christ, and may He help us to so abide in Him that we shall always be filled with His Spirit and work with His energies. Then shall our ministry be blessed as Paul's ministry was blessed, and the work of the Lord shall prosper in our hands.

VII

THE TRACT IN CHINA

"Let there be light."—GENESIS I. 3.

THE Christianisation of China is a gigantic work, and it is to be accomplished, not by any one specific method, but by a combination of different methods. It needs the co-operation of Divine and human instrumentalities in a great variety of ways.

I hardly need dwell on the great importance of tract work in China. It may be safely said that there is no heathen country in the world so well prepared as China for this particular method of instruction, for there is no other country where there are so many readers. It is impossible to say how many readers there are in that great Empire, for there is no way of arriving at the truth in regard to the matter. There can be no doubt, however, that the number of those who can read more or less is very large. Then they read to each other, for in almost every village there are some who can read, and the village teacher is always at hand.

The tract can go where the missionary cannot. The missionary cannot go into the homes of the people, into the houses of the rich, into the official establishments, and into the Imperial palace; but the tract can and does. It finds its way into hostile provinces and cities,

and witnesses for Christ in places to which the missionary has no access. The tract was in Hunan long before the missionary got there.

Again, the tract *abides*. The missionaries come and go and their words are often forgotten. But the tract stays, and is ever bearing witness to the truth. A man buys a tract and reads it. He may not be able to make much of it the first time. But he reads it again and again. By and by the light comes, and the man is saved. I could give you many instances of this.

The fact that the missionaries devote so much time to tract making and tract distributing is a proof that they at least attach the greatest value to this branch of the work. My ideal missionary combines in himself the preacher and the colporteur. Personally, I never feel that I have done my work till I have offered my books for sale, and I never feel satisfied with any effort in preaching to the heathen unless I succeed in inducing some of my hearers to purchase one or more copies. I never go on a missionary journey without taking with me a good supply of Gospels and tracts, which I sell in the streets of the cities, towns and villages through which I pass. Selling books in the streets is not always a pleasant experience. It has often to be done in the midst of much shouting and a great deal of rough handling on the part of the crowd. Moreover, selling books in the streets is looked upon by the Chinese as low and menial, and they will sometimes expostulate with the missionary on the impropriety of his conduct in thus demeaning himself. "You are a teacher. Why not hire a coolie to do that work? You are advanced in years, and we all respect you. Why do *you* go about

selling books? Why not leave that work to native colporteurs?" Such is the language one hears sometimes. It is important, however, that the work be done by the foreign missionary as well as by the native colporteur. The fact of the missionary himself doing the work does make an impression for good; it tends to give the people an idea of the earnestness of the missionary and of the reality of the work. A scholar at Hiau-Kan was telling the story of his conversion to a number of the literati of the place. "It was," said he, "the sight of a foreign missionary selling books and preaching the Gospel in the streets of Hankow that set me thinking seriously about the claims of Christianity, and that led me ultimately to join the Christian Church." The missionary in China who would see the work prosper must do the thing himself, no matter how difficult the work may be in itself, or how contemptible it may appear in the eyes of Chinese.

There are in China at present some six or seven Religious Tract Societies. All these societies are doing a good work for God in the Land of Sinim, and God is blessing them all. I can only speak at this time of the Central China Religious Tract Society, the society with which I have been most intimately connected, and which has its headquarters at Hankow. In speaking of its work, however, I shall be giving you a fair idea of the kind of work that is being carried on generally in China in this particular line of things. The C. C. R. T. S. was born in 1876. Up to that date the missionaries in Central China worked each in his own way, and each paying his own expenses. In 1875 the missionaries at Hankow and Wuchang formed themselves into a Tract

Society; and they did this on the strength of £50 kindly granted them by the Religious Tract Society of London. It was called the Hankow Religious Tract Society. The infant society began its career with a limited number of members and a Constitution not fully developed. But the child soon grew and we felt that it required a new name; so, in 1884, the old name was abandoned and the name, Central China Religious Tract Society, was adopted.

From the beginning, the circulation has been going up year by year, with the exception of two or three years of political unrest. In 1876 the circulation was only 9,000 publications; in 1899 it was 1,026,305; in 1905 it was 2,565,524. The circulation from 1878 to 1905, inclusive, totals 26,007,917 publications. The figures are positively bewildering. When the circulation touched the million some of us were inclined to rest and be thankful. Well, we were thankful, but we did not rest. And such was the case when it touched the two million.

But we feel in Central China to-day that we are only at the beginning of things. The work is a living work, the Empire is now open from end to end, and the minds of the people are open as they never were before. Hankow also is growing rapidly in size and importance, and is destined to become the greatest centre of commercial activity in the Empire; so the society's growth ought to be, and certainly will be, greater in the future than it has been in the past.

When I went to China, in 1855, the scheme of the venerable John Angel James to supply China with a million Testaments was the sensation of the day, so far

as the Christian world was concerned. The people of God throughout the world took a deep interest in that magnificent effort to touch the heart of China, and much good was expected to flow from it. Though the expected results did not follow, it is impossible not to admire the grandeur of the idea as it filled the soul of that devoted servant of Christ. Our Hankow Tract Society has been doing its work very noiselessly; even its existence is not known to many outside of China; and yet it has managed to give to the Chinese nearly *thirty millions of books and tracts within the thirty years of its existence.* What an army of preachers! It is impossible to overestimate the importance of this fact. The illuminating, the revolutionising, and the transforming power of a well-written tract is beyond all calculation. In fact, a man can have no conception of the full significance of what he is doing when he sits down to write a tract in China, or when he sends it forth among the people. There is Dr. Milne's tract, called "The Two Friends." Dr. Milne did many good things in his day. He did much valuable work, but not much of it has lived. He was inspired, however, to write this little book, and thus leave behind him something of imperishable worth. "The Two Friends" has lived, and will live as long as there are idolaters to be converted in China. By it Dr. Milne, though dead, is still living and ever preaching to thousands and tens of thousands of the Chinese people.

The circulation of our tracts is not only magnificent, the area it covers is also immense. They have been circulating in every part of the eighteen provinces, in Manchuria, Mongolia, Japan, Korea, the Straits

Settlements, and among the Chinese settlers in Canada, the United States, South Africa, Australia, and in every place where the almost ubiquitous Chinaman is found.

The chief aim of the C. C. R. T. S. from the beginning has been to meet the religious need of Chinese people. Some of our tracts are more or less scientific in their cast, and we have works on geography, history, and other branches of useful knowledge. But our grand theme is God and His redemptive love. What the Chinese need, above all else, is the knowledge of God in Christ. Other things are important and desirable, but this is China's great need.

The style of our books, though thoroughly good and idiomatic, is characterised by simplicity, lucidity, and definiteness. We never sacrifice the meaning to the style in order to please the vanity of the Confucian scholar and win his commendation. In all things our grand aim has been to make known to the millions of China, in language that cannot be misunderstood, the Gospel of the grace of God.

Our tracts are brought out in many forms. Some are books of considerable size, some are pamphlets consisting of a few leaves, some are sheet tracts, some are illustrated. Some of our tracts are expositions of Christian truth, some are on the evidences of Christianity, some are on Chinese superstitions, some are on practical religion, some are narrative tracts, some are on the prevalent vices of the Chinese, such as opium smoking, gambling, foot-binding, infanticide, and slavery. Most of our tracts are in prose, but some are in rhyme. Some are written in the classical style, and some in Mandarin

colloquial. We prepare our tracts in various styles, in order to meet the tastes and capacities of all classes of readers.

In 1894 the Society issued a Union Hymn-Book, which has been adopted by all the missions in Central China except one. The book has had a very wide circulation. It is right and fitting that this Hymnal should be issued by the Tract Society, for the Tract Society is our one union society. The platform of the C. C. R. T. S. is a platform on which all the missionaries meet as one in Christ. Here we forget our denominational differences or sectional interests, and unite as one body in one grand, earnest effort to give the Chinese people the very best Christian literature which we can produce.

All our tracts are sold. In the early days of the missions in China, Christian books, both Scriptures and tracts, were given away gratuitously, but that system was abandoned many years ago. The payment, however, represents only a part of the cost, and there is a loss on almost every tract. Some of our publications are self-supporting, and some bring in a slight profit, but they are very few. Still the payment amounts to a very substantial sum. In 1904, it was nearly £1,000. The larger the circulation the greater the loss, and the deficit is met by annual grants made by the Religious Tract Societies of England, America, and Canada, and the voluntary subscriptions of many friends in China and elsewhere. We are greatly indebted to the Canada Religious Tract Society for their annual grant of $500.00 (the interest from the bequest of the late William Gooderham), given specifically for support of colportage work, which was supplemented for 1905 by a gift of $50.00 by Mr. and Mrs. Duncan

McVanel. In 1905 eighty-three colporteurs were at work, superintended by eight missionaries, and they sold in that one year 968 Bibles, 4,469 Testaments, 84,111 Gospels and other portions of Scripture, and 264,332 tracts and books. That is a noble piece of work, but it could never have been accomplished had the Canada Religious Tract Society not come to our aid with its generous grant.

But we are more indebted to the Religious Tract Society of London than to all the other societies put together. Its annual grant to the C. C. R. T. S. is £300. But this does not cover our indebtedness to this noble society. It will be a surprise to some to learn that up to the present time the C. C. R. T. S. has never had a home which it could call its own, and that till quite recently it never had an agent set apart to look after its affairs. The National Bible Society of Scotland has kindly supplied it with a sort of resting-place during these years, and the missionaries of the various societies at Hankow have been acting as its agents. About two years ago we began to feel that this state of things could go on no longer. The growing work of our respective missions has been pressing heavily upon us, and we have been finding it more and more difficult every year to command time for extra work. Even if the work of the Society were to stop where it is now, which it cannot do, it would be impossible for us to go on as we have been doing in the past. We are therefore compelled to procure suitable buildings for the Society, and engage an agent whose sole duty it will be to attend to its work. We have already engaged an agent who is admirably qualified for the post and whose salary is guaranteed for three years by the Religious Tract Society of London.

The next thing to be done is to supply the Society with a suitable home. It is proposed to put up a block of buildings consisting of a depôt, a book-shop, a committee room, and dwelling rooms for the agent, which shall be the home and property of the Society. To accomplish this we shall need about £3,000, of which about £1,300 is now in hand, mostly subscribed by missionaries in China. Another £1,700 is urgently needed. It is hoped that many friends in Canada, America and England will come to the help of the Society, so as to enable the missionaries who are their representatives in China the more efficiently to do this work.

This is a most important forward step, a step that will help on the growth and efficiency of the work immensely. If realised, we shall have at Hankow in the years to come a depôt well stocked with the best Christian and educational literature to be found in the Chinese language, and also with Bible and Tract Societies' publications for the benefit of the European and American populations residing in the Hankow settlements, and the English-speaking Chinese who live round about those settlements or may visit them from time to time. The realisation of the scheme would give a great impetus to the work of the Society. It would enable us to enlarge our sphere of influence amongst the masses, and to influence, as we have never influenced hitherto, the officials, the scholars, and the intellectual leaders of the nation. May I ask all who feel an interest in the welfare of China to join us in prayer for God's continued blessing on our Tract Society, and to subscribe according to their power to the special fund we are now attempting to raise?

I should like to answer two or three questions which are often asked with regard to tract work in China. In the first place, is there not much waste? You scatter your publications over the land by the millions and tens of millions, but is there not much waste? Yes, there may be some waste, as men count waste, but to get satisfactory results in a vast country like China you must work on a large scale. Moreover, in every department of Christian work there must be a good deal of what is called apparent waste. It is not every sermon that results in conversion. If missionaries were to limit their sermons to one per week, or so, the work of conversion would make but little progress in China. To bring one soul to God scores of sermons may have to be preached, nay, hundreds, and yet when one soul is saved no one speaks of the long and continuous preaching as waste. The abundant preaching does bring forth fruit, and so it is with book circulation. In Central China the missionary work is carried on on a magnificent scale, and we have abundant reason to rejoice in the fact. The daily preaching at a large number of chapels, and that for hours every day at each; the great healing work that is going on incessantly at the hospitals and dispensaries; the constant teaching in the schools; and the mighty stream of Christian literature which the Central China Religious Tract Society and the National Bible Society of Scotland have been pouring forth for so many years—these are the means employed in Central China for the evangelisation of the people. These four departments of the work have been carried on for many years on a grand scale, and we have every reason to thank God for the noble results which all these departments can show.

The second question is this: Is it true that the missionary literature in China is practically worthless? Is it true that it consists of works badly translated, carelessly written, and altogether unedited? This is one of the charges brought against our Christian literature in China. But I am glad to be able to say that it is not true. That there are worthless productions among the Christian publications in China, just as there are among those of this country and every other country, I am willing to admit. But that our Christian literature as a whole is worthless I most emphatically deny. All the Tract Societies in China are anxious to turn out the best possible work, both as regards matter and style. As to the Central China Tract Society I can speak with authority. The greatest care is taken to secure perfection in both substance and form. We have an Examining Committee consisting of the most experienced missionaries in Central China. Every tract or book proposed for publication is sent to each member of the committee, and it cannot be adopted till it has been considered at a meeting called for the express purpose of discussing its merits and correcting its faults. No tract or book can be published with the Society's funds which has not been examined and endorsed by the Examining Committee. This will give our friends an idea of the importance we attach to the quality of our publications.

One of the best proofs I can give of the value of our tracts is the general esteem in which they are held by the missionaries themselves. Our tracts are free from all denominational or sectarian traits, so that among our purchasers there are to be found missionaries of all nationalities, denominations, and societies. The

testimonies to their value which we are constantly receiving from the missionaries from all parts of China are simply innumerable. But the best testimony from the missionaries is the generous help they have been giving us in the shape of subscriptions and the noble way they have come to our rescue in times of difficulty and distress. Among our best annual subscribers are the missionaries. In 1892 a great fire broke out in the neighbourhood of our depot and converted our stock of books into ashes. No sooner did our loss become known than the subscriptions began to pour in from all parts of China. The amount reached $2,725 before the end of the year, and nearly the whole of it came from the pockets of the missionaries, that is, from the pockets of the men who knew the character of the books and the good they were doing.

The third question is this: Is it not true that all Christian books in China, whether Scripture or tracts, are destroyed when they fall into the hands of the heathen? Is it not true that they are converted into soles for Chinese shoes, or consumed in the furnaces specially set up for burning lettered paper? There are men in this country who say that they have been to China and that they can vouch for the fact that such is the fate of all missionary literature. Well, I have been to China, too, and I can vouch for the fact that such is not the case. In the early days of missions in China Scriptures and tracts were given away gratuitously, and I am afraid that many of them were in those days committed to the furnace or destroyed in other ways. It is not at all likely that any of them were turned into soles for Chinese shoes. The reverence of the Chinese for printed paper would

prevent that. But whatever may have been the fate of the Christian books and tracts in the early days, in the days of free distribution, we are perfectly sure that there is no wholesale destruction now. The system of payment has produced a great change in this respect, and the gradual awakening of China during the past ten or twenty years has produced a still greater change. Some of our Scriptures and tracts are, no doubt, destroyed still, but very few, I think. The Chinese will not readily destroy what they have given money for, and the day to treat foreign literature with contempt is gone. We know that one governor applied, some time ago, for hundreds of copies of the New Testament to be distributed among the officials of his province in order that they might acquaint themselves with the facts and principles of the Christian religion. And we hear of one of the greatest viceroys in the Empire ordering the use of the New Testament in the Government schools. The fact is, our Scriptures and tracts are now to be found everywhere and are generally respected and appreciated. Were the missionaries banished from the country tomorrow our books would still be found in the homes of the people, ever testifying for Christ and leading men to God.

Let me now give two or three instances in connection with tract distribution, which will serve as illustrations and proofs of the fact that our Christian literature is being read, understood, and appreciated, and that in many instances it is blessed to the salvation of men.

One day I was walking up and down the streets of Hankow with some Gospels and tracts in my hands. I

was stopped by a respectable-looking man who wanted to know if I had any new books. I showed him the books I had, one by one, and I had a great variety. Said he: "I have all these. Have you any new books?" "Wait a bit," I said; "here is an interesting little book, I don't think you have read this." He looked at it and said, with a smile: "Yes, I have. I know all about it. It is a very good book." "What does it talk about?" I asked. "Oh," said he, "it talks about this," pointing to his tongue. And he was right, for the little book was no other than a translation of Mark Guy Pearse's "Terrible Red Dwarf." That is a typical case. Such cases are frequently met with at the chapels and elsewhere.

More than twenty years ago a tract found its way into the basket of a waste-paper collector and was being carried away along with other written paper, to be consigned to the furnace. A shopkeeper of the place, Mr. Chang, caught sight of it and rescued it from destruction. He took it home and read it carefully. Mr. Chang already possessed a New Testament which he had purchased some time before, but finding he could not understand it, he laid it aside. The reading of the tract, however, threw an entirely new light on the Word of God, and led to his conversion. He joined the church connected with the Wesleyan Mission at Tehngan in 1886. In 1889 he had the joy of seeing nine persons baptised in his own house, four of them being members of his own family, and all of them brought to the Lord through his instrumentality. He became an earnest worker for Christ. For several years he was employed by the mission as an evangelist, and it was his great desire at one time to go to Hunan and devote himself to the evangelisation

of that hostile province. He died a few years ago a ripe Christian, highly esteemed, and greatly beloved by all who knew him.

A man named Tang, in the county of Tan-lin, in the Province of Sze-Chwan, came sometime in the year 1885 into possession of a portion of the Scriptures and two tracts, one of which was the "Christian Trimetrical Classic." The books were casually looked at for a long time without light coming. At length Mr. Tang, who was then fifty years of age, set himself to learn the Trimetrical Classic by heart. At last the light came, and he and his wife began to worship God as best they could. In due time both husband and wife were baptised. They then began to work for God with great earnestness. Very soon a little church sprang up around them, and for many years a large and flourishing work has been going on at the place, and all as the result of reading our Scriptures and tracts. I know that as early as March, 1894, there were more than sixty members on the church roll at Tan-lin.

In 1893 a Confucian scholar named Yang Pao-Keng expressed a desire to have an interview with me. Of course, I gave him a cordial invitation. In the course of a most interesting conversation the following dialogue passed between us. Q.—"You have been reading some of our Christian books, I am told?" A.—"Yes, I have read quite a number of them." Q.—"What do you think of their teachings respecting God as compared with the teachings of the Sung Dynasty philosophers?" A.—"The difference is very great. They speak of God as Law. You speak of God as a Being—personal, spiritual, and eternal." Q.—"Who are right?" A.—"You are

right, of course. There can be no law without a lawgiver. What they call law is simply the order of the universe—the thought of God as manifested in nature. But where a thought is there a thinker must be." Q.—"You are a B.A. in the Confucian school and reverence the great Sage of China. Will you tell me what you think of Jesus as compared with Confucius?" A.—"The difference is very great. Confucius was a mere man. Jesus is God. Confucius had no method of salvation. He taught men the duties of life and exhorted men to be virtuous. But he had no method of salvation, no way by which he might save men from sin and its consequences." Q.—"Will you tell me what you conceive the method of Jesus to be?" A.—"In Christianity there are two doctrines of which Confucianism knows nothing—the doctrine of atonement and the doctrine of regeneration. Jesus saves by atoning for the sins of man and by changing the hearts of men. These are doctrines of which Confucianism knows nothing." Our conversation turned on other points of great interest, but what I have now repeated will suffice to give some idea of its nature. I invited him to the Sunday services, and on the following Sunday I was glad to see him present. He continued to come regularly, and after some months of probation he was received into the church. At my suggestion he wrote a tract in three chapters—one on gambling, one on the opium vice, and one on foot-binding. It is a capital tract and has had a wide circulation. No sooner was Mr. Yang baptised than his faith was put to the test. He had been employed by a wealthy Cantonese at Hankow as a private tutor to his sons and was receiving a very good salary. His employer

objected to his Christianity and told him that he must give up his religion or give up his situation. Mr. Yang, without a moment's hesitation, gave up his situation. The interesting thing about Mr. Yang is that he is a distinguished scholar, and that, when he first visited me, he owed all his knowledge of the truth and his convictions with regard to it to the reading of Christian books. Up to that date he had never attended a Christian service, never listened to a single sermon, and never spoken to a foreign missionary. Mr. Yang is still living and is usefully employed as a writer in the preparation of Christian books.

I could give many more such instances, but I have said enough, I hope, to show that the Tract Societies in China are among the brightest lights which are now shining in the midst of the darkness which is covering that dark land, and that among them the Central China Religious Tract Society occupies a foremost place. How many there are to whom our tracts have been thus blessed, eternity alone will reveal. But that they have been instrumental in leading many souls to Christ is a fact abundantly proved. How many there are in China to-day who, though not connected with any Christian Church, know the truth and believe in it, it is impossible to say. There may be thousands; there may be tens of thousands. Go where you will in China these days, and you are sure to meet with people who know the truth to some extent, and this is to be ascribed in a very great measure to the widespread dissemination of Christian literature.

I should like to refer to the bearing of tract work on China's great awakening. China is not only waking up,

but actually awake, and I ascribe this in a great measure to the influence of the Christian Press. Down with opium, down with foot-binding, down with the degradation of women, down with the ignorance and the self-satisfaction which have held the nation in bondage for so long a period. That is China's present cry, and that is what our tracts have been preaching for many decades all over the Empire. And this is not all. The news has just reached me that the native Press is taking up the vital question of a religion for China and is preaching against idolatry. It declares that so far as China is concerned Buddhism and Taoism are effete, and that Christianity is the religion of the future. Then think of the ease with which the idols have been dislodged by the officials all over the Empire and the temples converted into schools. There was a time when it would have been dangerous for the officials to attempt such a profanation of sacred things. Some great change must have come over the minds of the people, and the question is, to what the change is to be ascribed. I ascribe it to the missionary teaching that has been going on during the past fifty years, and I do not hesitate to ascribe it in a large measure to the Christian literature that has been sown broadcast over the face of the land. The people's faith in the idols and in idolatry has been greatly undermined by our books and tracts, and this will account to a great extent for what we see to-day.

In conclusion, let me refer to the power of the Press in China. Some years ago the anti-Christian native Press was very active, especially in the province of Hunan. Anything more foul, more blasphemous, more hostile or more inflammatory it would be impossible for the mind

of man to conceive. For some years the whole country, and especially the valley of the Yangtse, was deluged with this abominable literature. It was to be met with everywhere, and everywhere it was poisoning the minds of the people against the missionary and his work. The Hunan books and tracts were given away gratuitously by the million. If any one wants to have an idea of how well the Hunanese succeeded in their satanic purpose, if any one wants to have an idea of the power of that vile Press, let him think of the outrages perpetrated in China some twelve or fifteen years ago. Let him think of the riots in the Yangtse Valley in 1891, the Sung-pu massacre in 1893, the Ku-Cheng tragedy and the Sze-Chwan uprisings in 1895, not to mention other disturbances of more or less severity. The Hunan viper-Press was responsible in a great measure for every one of these deeds of violence. That Press has been dead for some time, and I only refer to it now in order to show what a mighty power the Press in China may wield and sometimes does wield.

With the awaking of China the native Press has taken a new start and is making wonderful strides. We are told that altogether apart from Christian literature issued through missionary agencies, the Chinese publishing houses of Shanghai are flooding the country with modern books on all conceivable subjects—books of geography, government, law, political economy, mathematics, literature, philosophy, also educational text-books, histories, novels, etc. There are no fewer than 1,100 works dealing with subjects wholly foreign to Confucianism or the teachings of China's ancient philosophers. Whereas a few years ago there were only seven newspapers in

China, there are now 157 daily, weekly and monthly journals discussing public questions and advocating reform. Most heartily do we sympathise with all this new life and wonderful activity. The Chinese have had a long sleep, but are waking up and finding themselves hungry. It is for the Christian Press to take advantage of this hunger and do what it can to supply China with the sound, wholesome and all-round satisfying food which China so greatly needs. So far as religious literature is concerned, the Christian Press must look after that. The providing of that must be left to the Bible Societies, the Christian Literature Society, and the Tract Societies. These are now doing a splendid work, but if they are to meet the wants of the times they must put on new strength and redouble their efforts. This is the day of boundless opportunity in China. There never has been in China such a thirst for Christian literature as there is to-day, and there never has been a day when our very best literature was so much needed or when it could have wielded so powerful an influence.

The only way we as missionaries can deal with opposition of every kind is to pour in the light, and we must do so in every possible way. We must live it down, we must preach it down, and we must write it down. We must pour in the light in the shape of the literature that shall breathe the spirit of purity, of love, and of universal brotherhood. We must keep pouring it in in spite of all opposition, hatred and malice. The light is greater than the darkness, the truth of Heaven is mightier than the falsehood of hell, and God is infinitely stronger than the devil. The day is coming, and it is not far off, when China will turn to the light. In the meantime it is for

us to be pouring it in everywhere and in every possible way.

Let no one be discouraged with regard to China. Jesus Christ is taking possession of that Empire. The Captain of our salvation is there conquering and to conquer. Don't suppose that I am closing my eyes to the difficulties. I am quite willing to admit that very little has been done as compared with what remains to be done, but "my faith is large in time and that which shapes it to some perfect end." The obstacles are many, but they shall be overcome. What are obstacles to God? To man these days they are mere incentives. See how man triumphs over obstacles. See how he compels Nature to yield up her treasures and reveal her secrets. See how he pierces the mountains and girdles the earth with his iron roads. See the speed with which he ploughs the watery wave, and the ease with which he tames the lightning to carry his messages. Man in these days defies obstacles, matures his plans and completes his work. Shall God be less than man? Shall man succeed and God fail? Impossible! God said in the beginning, "Let there be light, and there was light." Do we not hear the same voice in these days speak the same almighty fiat with regard to the dark places of the earth? In Polynesia, in Africa, in Madagascar, in India, in China, in Japan, in Korea, and in almost every land under the sun God is now saying, "Let there be light." Shall He speak in vain? Impossible! The light has already been kindled, and, having been kindled, it must spread till all is luminous. The sun of righteousness is rising on every land. The mountain tops are beginning to catch his gladsome beams and rejoice in a new day.

Ere long He will descend into every valley, enter every ravine, chase away all the darkness and the shadows, and fill the whole world with life, light, and joy.

> "God works in all things; all obey
> His first propulsion from the night;
> Wake thou and watch! The world is gray
> In morning light."

VIII

THE BIBLE IN CHINA

"Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction, which is in righteousness: that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work."—II. TIMOTHY III., 16, 17.

I WISH to speak on Bible work in China. And, first, I should like to say a few words on Bible translation.

It is just possible that the Christian Church in China is indebted to the Nestorians for her first translation of the Bible. The Nestorian tablet, erected 781 A.D., and discovered at the city of Si-ngan, in the province of Shen-Si, in the year 1625, having been buried in the ground for nearly eight centuries, states that the most virtuous Olopim came from Syria in the year 635, bringing with him the Sacred Scriptures, and that they were translated by him in the Imperial Library. It also states that the Emperor Tai Tsung became deeply impressed with the rectitude and truth of the Christian religion, and that he gave special orders for its dissemination. This translation, whether in the whole or in part, has long since perished. Not a fragment of it remains, and no reference to it has been found in Chinese books. The Nestorians arrived in China early in the sixth century. They seem to have made great progress at

one time. Marco Polo, in the 13th century, speaks of them as numerous and highly respected. Now, however, neither churches, books, nor converts, bearing the Nestorian name, are to be found in China. The Si-ngan monument, the most ancient Christian inscription found in all Asia, alone remains as witness to the existence of the Nestorian faith in that great Empire.

Though Bible translation has not been the policy of the Roman Catholic Church in China, it would be wrong to suppose that she has been altogether inactive in this line of things. John de Monte Corvino translated the New Testament and the Psalms into the language of the Tartars, that is, of the Mongols who held the Empire of China at that time. Speaking of his missionary life, this truly consecrated man says: "It is now twelve years since I have heard any news from the West. I am become old and grey-headed, but it is rather through labours and tribulations than through age, for I am only fifty years old. I have learned the Tartar language and literature, into which I have translated the whole of the New Testament and the Psalms of David, and have caused them to be transcribed with the utmost care. I write and read and preach openly and freely the testimony of the law of Christ." This translation was made about the year 1300.

The second entrance of the Roman Catholic missionaries into China was at the close of the sixteenth century. From that time till now the Roman Catholic Church in China has been represented by a host of learned, able, earnest, and hard working men. But though extremely active in the prosecution of their mission, a complete

translation of the Scriptures has not as yet been printed and published by them. Before the days of Dr. Morrison, a translation of the greater part, if not the whole, of the New Testament appears to have been made by the Catholic missionaries, and a translation of the Old Testament *may* have been made by them also; but, as I have already stated, no version of either the one or the other had been printed and published by them. Whatever translations existed were in manuscript, kept in private hands, and not placed at the service of the people; and such is the case to-day, so far as I know. Thus the great honour of giving the Chinese people the Bible in their own language was left to the Protestant Church.

The first complete Bible, comprising the Old and New Testaments, was issued from the press at Serampore, India, generally called the Marshman version. The work was begun in 1804. The New Testament was published in 1813, and the whole Bible in 1822, by the liberality of the British and Foreign Bible Society. This work may be looked upon as a *courageous attempt* to supply China with a translation of the Word of God. It has had no standing among the Chinese versions, and its value as an evangelising agency in China has not been appreciable.

Whilst Marshman's great work was being carried on at Serampore, a similar undertaking was commenced, prosecuted, and completed in China itself. Dr. Morrison arrived in China in 1807. He began with the New Testament, taking the MS. copy which he found in the British Museum as his basis, and completed the translation in 1813. At that time he was joined by Milne.

The two friends worked together on the Old Testament, the younger man sending his work to the older for revision. The whole work was completed in 1819, and having undergone a careful revision at the hand of Dr. Morrison, was published in 1823, just one year after the publication of Dr. Marshman's version. The publication of this version is also due to the generous aid of the British and Foreign Bible Society. This was the first version of the Scriptures ever printed and published *in* China.

The production of this version was a grand achievement. Dr. Morrison possessed the genius of work, and he brought to the task patient endurance, indomitable energy, and long labour. But it was not a perfect work. Like Dr. Marshman's version, it was necessarily very defective, and many efforts have been made to improve upon it.

I have no time to dwell on the many versions which have made their appearance since the days of Dr. Morrison. We have the Medhurst, Gutzlaff and Bridgman version, the Delegates version, the Bridgman and Culbertson version. We have versions in high Wen-li (high classical style), in easy Wen-li (simpler classical style), in the Mandarin dialect, and in some of the Colloquial dialects. There is a scheme now on foot for securing in China a single standard Union version of the whole Bible in three forms: one in high Wen-li, one in easy Wen-li, and one in the Mandarin dialect. It is a good idea. The work is still going on, and we are waiting the result. Should this attempt prove a failure, another will have to be made; for a standard Union version for all China is a necessity, and must be realised

sooner or later. The later versions are great improvements on Dr. Morrison's. Still, Dr. Morrison stands at the head of all the translators and revisers in China. He laid the foundation, and others have been building thereupon. The name of this great man can never perish, and his influence can never pass away. His translations and dictionaries have already passed into improved and more perfect works. But Morrison lives; his spirit is still marching on; his consecrated life and lofty example remain, and will remain, a light and an inspiration to all his successors, to the end of time.

The work of Bible translation in China has been carried on in the midst of many difficulties. In the days of Dr. Morrison it was specially so. There was, in the first place, the opposition of the Chinese Government. No sooner did he arrive in China, than he was told by Sir George Staunton that the Chinese Government had prohibited, on pain of death, any native's teaching the language to a foreigner. The Government would sometimes issue orders to apprehend all natives in the service of foreigners. Sometimes, on the coming of a great official to the place, teachers and assistants would all have to disappear, and all Chinese studies would have to be laid aside. The blocks were sometimes carried away into the country, and sometimes actually destroyed, in order to prevent discovery. Government officers would sometimes break into the printing office and carry off both books and types. Dr. Morrison's labours have been called *subterranean;* and so they were both literally and metaphorically. I can never think of them without thanking God for the noble heroism which

enabled that man of God to toil on day after day, and year after year, in the midst of circumstances so adverse and lonely.

Then the language was a great difficulty in those days. It was impossible to secure the services of thoroughly competent teachers; and the helps which exist now, in the shape of grammars, dictionaries, and translations of native works, did not exist at all then.

It was thought impossible in those days to make a translation of the Scriptures into the Chinese language. One of the directors of the East India Company, a great Orientalist, gave it as his deliberate and final conviction, that "no translation of the Bible could be made into Chinese; for he knew the nature of the language would not allow of any translation whatever being made into it." But Dr. Morrison was the very man to attempt and to execute the impossible task. When thinking of the missionary work as a student, his fervent prayer was, "that God would station him in that part of the mission field where the difficulties were the greatest." God answered that prayer in a signal manner, and sent him to China. He faced the difficulties in God's strength, and they were surmounted. Subsequent translators have not had to encounter obstacles as formidable as those which Dr. Morrison had to encounter; so that with a greater sense of security, better teachers, and a more thorough knowledge of the language, has come improved work. Still the work of translating the Scriptures into Chinese has not ceased to be a work of extreme difficulty. It still requires "the patience that refuses to be conquered, and the diligence that never tires." But I am some-

times asked: Is it not unfortunate that there are so many separate translations of the Scriptures in China? Is it not extremely perplexing to the Chinese to have so many versions of the same book? Well, I must confess that it would have been a very fine thing if perfection could have been attained at one bound—if, for instance, Dr. Morrison could have turned out a work such as would have satisfied China to the end of time. But this was an impossible achievement. Neither Dr. Morrison nor anyone else could have done it. The most unfortunate thing of all would have been a willingness on the part of the missionaries to rest satisfied with Dr. Morrison's version, or any other imperfect version. That would have been a calamity indeed. Let us not dread the multiplication of versions, but rather dread the indifference, or the indolence, which would lead the missionaries to accept as *final* anything less than the very best version that can be secured in the age in which they live. The aim of the missionaries ought to be perfection, and they ought not to rest until perfection, or at least the perfection possible to them, is attained. In each and all the versions now existing I can see nothing but an earnest desire on the part of all concerned to promote the highest interest of Bible work in China.

Let me now speak of Bible *distribution* in China. This is a very important work, and it is carried on, not by employed colporteurs only, but by the missionaries also. Every true missionary is a colporteur as well as a preacher.

The first missionary journey ever made by any Protestant missionary in the Far East was made by

Dr. Milne, soon after his arrival in 1813, and that was a book-distributing journey. It was not a journey *in* China, but through the East Indian Archipelago. A missionary journey *in* China would have been impossible in those days. Later on, two or three important missionary journeys were made along the coast by Gutzlaff, Medhurst, and others, on each of which Scriptures and tracts were freely distributed. But the work in those days was attended by many difficulties and trials which do not exist now, so the missionary journeys were few and far between. Since the year 1860, the year in which the Tientsin Treaty came into full operation, the missionary journeys have been very numerous and very extensive. During these forty-seven years the Gospel has been preached and Scriptures and tracts have been distributed in every province and in almost every city and town of every province. The distribution in the early days was very small as compared with what it is these days. Dr. Medhurst, in his "China: Its State and Prospects," tells us that no fewer than 751,763 copies of books and tracts were poured forth from the Chinese mission presses from 1818 to 1836, and he mentions the fact as something wonderful. And so it was wonderful in those days and for those times. But compare the present with the past, and notice the altered condition of China and the remarkable progress of the work in China in this respect. There are three Bible Societies working in China at the present time—the British and Foreign Bible Society, the American Bible Society, and the National Bible Society of Scotland. The united circulation of these three societies has been more than 3,000,000 books *per annum* for some years.

In 1904, there were circulated by the British and Foreign Bible Society alone more than 1,088,000 copies of the Scriptures, either complete or in parts. And then I might mention the circulation of books and tracts of the Tract Societies and the Christian Literature Society, which amounts to several millions *per annum*.

Please also bear in mind that in those early days all our Scriptures and tracts were given away gratuitously, whilst now every book is sold and bought, with the exception of a limited number given away at literary examinations.

Thus the Bible has not only been translated into the Chinese language, it has been widely scattered over the Chinese Empire. It is in all the provinces, and in every city and town of every province. It is being read by tens of thousands, and hundreds of thousands, of the people, and it is everywhere witnessing for God and His truth. This is a fact of great significance in connection with our great work in China. The fact that the Word of God is in so many homes, and is being read by so many people, ought to inspire hope and stimulate prayer. Though the missionary cannot be everywhere, our Scriptures and tracts are everywhere, and everywhere do they form a mighty weapon in the Spirit's hands to the casting down of strongholds.

There is an impression touching Bible distribution in China to which I should like to refer. Lord Curzon, in his "Problems of the Far East," says: "Another cause of stumbling is supplied by the unedited and ill-revised translations of the Bible, and particularly of the Old Testament, that are printed off by the million, and

scattered broadcast through the country." With regard to this statement I have two remarks to make. First, I should like to know how Lord Curzon knows that the translations are *unedited* and *ill-revised*. Lord Curzon doubtless knows much; but I have yet to learn that he knows Chinese. Secondly, I should like to state that the Scriptures are all sold, and not given away indiscriminately. Let me give you one fact with regard to Bible distribution in China. I have spoken of the circulation of the British and Foreign Bible Society, in 1904, as being more than 1,088,000 volumes. Of these, only 14,974 were whole Bibles, and only 40,523 were whole New Testaments, most of which were circulated among the converts. The rest, amounting to more than a million, were portions, consisting for the most part of Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles. These portions are the scriptures that were circulated among the heathen. Thus, the assertion that the Old Testament is printed off by the million and scattered broadcast through the country is not true. I have never known more than one missionary who believed in the indiscriminate circulation of the Bible in China, and that one has been in heaven a good many years.

All the years I have lived in China I have been an active colporteur, as well as an active preacher, and my own plan of distribution has been this: A Gospel to anyone who may ask for it; a larger portion to an earnest seeker; a whole New Testament to a man who has some knowledge of the truth and is ready for more; and the whole Bible to converts only. Whenever a heathen man purchases a portion of the scriptures from me, I try and get him to purchase a tract also, for I have found by

many years' experience that the latter is very helpful to the understanding of the former. In order to obtain the best possible results, you require three things—the scriptures, the tract, and the living voice. Each of these separately may be productive of much good; but it is only in the happy combination of the three that the best possible results can be secured.

I wish all the Bible Societies could be moved to adopt the principle of annotations, in order to make the scriptures more intelligible to the heathen reader. The National Bible Society of Scotland has been issuing the Gospels and the Acts with brief explanatory notes for many years, and has thus greatly enhanced the value of its work. This is a splendid move in the right direction. It is to be devoutly hoped that the other societies will follow in its footsteps. The cry for notes does not spring from a lack of faith in the Word of God, but the very reverse.

Let me now speak of the value of the Bible in China. And there, in the first place, is its value to the Christian teacher. To the missionary, as a teacher, the value of the Bible is simply unspeakable. How the Roman Catholic priest manages to get along without the Bible, I cannot say; but I do know, by long experience, that to the Protestant missionary the Bible is indispensable. Without it he would find it impossible to go on teaching from Sunday to Sunday, and from year's end to year's end. With it, he finds he can go on and teach for ever; for the Book is exhaustless. It is ever fresh and ever new.

And here I should like to say a word on the value of the Old Testament in our efforts to teach the Chinese

Christians. We find in it a perfect storehouse of examples and illustrations which appeal powerfully to the Oriental mind. Do I want to illustrate faith? I go to Genesis, and, with Paul, I find my illustration in the life of Abraham. And, when I speak of Abraham, I do not find it necessary to remind my hearers that we know nothing *historically* about Abraham. Do I want to illustrate prayer? I go again to Genesis; and, with Charles Wesley, I find it in wrestling Jacob. And, when I speak of Jacob, I do not find it necessary to remind my hearers that we know nothing *historically* about Jacob. Do I want to give the converts an idea of what true repentance means? I take the 51st Psalm for my text, and I don't find it necessary to remind them that it is a post-exilic production—that David never wrote it, and never could have written it. "The then *supposed* ancestors of the Israelites" are very real to us and to our converts. And so is Moses, and so is David, and so are all the prophets. No doubt we are old-fashioned, and altogether behind the age; but we cannot help that. We are patiently waiting till literary criticism has had time to complete its cycle.

Let me now speak of the value of the Bible to the converts. We drill our converts in the Bible, and try by every possible means to make them genuine Bible Christians. We have Bible classes for both men and women. We have Sunday schools, and they are attended by old and young. The Bible is taught in our day schools, and portions of it are committed to memory by the scholars. Old men and old women learn to read, in order to be able to read the Bible. Thus we make the Bible a regular study, and the converts find in the study of it not only

spiritual food, but splendid mental exercise also. It not only furnishes the mind with information on the highest subjects; it brightens the intellect, stimulates thought, and kindles the imagination. The consequence is that the Christian is a much more intelligent man than his heathen neighbour in the same station in life, and that the Protestant convert stands far above the Catholic convert in his knowledge of Christian truth.

The Protestant convert, with the Bible in his hands, proves himself to be more than a match for the Roman Catholic priest even. Take the following dialogue, which passed some years ago between a foreign priest and one of our Hupeh converts, as an illustration: The priest to the convert: "Do you worship the Holy Mother Mary?" "No, I do not." "Do you worship Jesus?" "Yes, I do." "If you worship Jesus, why do you refuse to worship Mary?" "Because Jesus is God. Mary is not God. There is nothing said in the New Testament about worshipping Mary." "But is not Mary the mother of Jesus?" "Yes." "Well, if you worship the Son, ought you not to worship the mother also?" So far the priest. Now for the convert: "You worship Mary, the mother of Jesus?" "Yes, I do." "Do you worship Mary's mother?" "No, I do not." "But if you worship the daughter, ought you not to worship the mother also, and the grandmother, and the great-grandmother besides?" I need not add that that brought the conversation to an end. The convert was dismissed with the reminder that he was a miserable heretic. In 1868 the late Mr. Wylie and myself took two of the Hankow converts with us to the west as colporteurs. At Chung-King, in Sze-Chwan, they came into contact with

the Roman Catholic bishop. He was much struck with their intelligence, and tried to convert them, and make them Roman Catholics. But it was all in vain. They knew their Bible too well. To every argument of his they were able to oppose their emphatic "Thus it is written."

But what about colportage work? Is there any use in going about the country selling Scriptures to the heathen? Can you point to any one heathen man who has ever been brought to Christ through the reading of the Scriptures? I am glad to be able to say that I can. Let me give two or three instances, and please take them as specimens of many more that might be given.

More than fifty years ago a military mandarin stepped into the London Mission Chapel at Shanghai and received a copy of the New Testament from the venerable Dr. Medhurst. Some years after a respectable looking man entered one of the Baptist chapels in the same city, and as soon as he had an opportunity walked up to the preacher, Mr. Cabbanis of the American Baptist Society, and said: "Teacher, you ought to pray earnestly that God would have mercy on the people, and give them rain." Mr. Cabbanis, not knowing what to make of the man, said: "You ought to pray yourself to the *true* God for rain." He replied solemnly, "I do pray to the *true* God constantly and earnestly." Mr. Cabbanis asked him if he had joined the church. The man replied that he did not know what was meant by joining the church. Mr. Cabbanis asked him if he had been baptised. He said, "Yes, I have been baptised." "By whom?" asked Mr. Cabbanis. "By the Heavenly Father Himself," was the reply. He was asked how it

was done. He replied: "Some time ago I received a New Testament from Dr. Medhurst. In reading the book I learned that as many as believed were baptised. I did not know what that meant, so I asked a Roman Catholic convert, who was an acquaintance of mine, to explain the meaning of baptism. He did so; but as I knew no one to whom I could apply for baptism, I went out one day when it was raining, bared my breast, looked up to heaven, and was there and then baptised in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost." Mr. Cabbanis was of course deeply interested in the man, instructed him more fully, and finally immersed him; shortly after Mr. Cabbanis visited the man's home. He himself was not at home at the time, but when Mr. Cabbanis asked for him he was told: "Oh, yes, he lives here. You want the man who is constantly talking about Jesus." Mr. Cabbanis had some conversation with the wife and other members of the family, and found that they had a good knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. That is one instance of good done in the early days. Let me give you another. A farmer who had long been a seeker after holiness, and was a leader in a Chinese heterodox sect, came into possession of a copy of St. John's Gospel. There he read of the light which lighteth every man coming into the world. He read and re-read till at last his understanding was illumined and his heart was touched. He threw away his old books and began to commit the Gospel to memory. He learnt a good portion of it by heart, became a genuine believer in Christ, and at length was baptised.

I will give one instance more. Mr. Li, of Pien Liang, in the province of Honan, obtained by accident a copy

of the Acts of the Apostles. He was so impressed with its contents that he resolved to come to Hankow, a distance of 400 English miles, for further instruction. He came, in due time was baptised, and returned to his home rejoicing.

Let me add to these instances the testimony of a missionary to the value of colportage work. The Rev. John Macgowan, of Amoy, tells us that the colporteurs under his supervision in 1887 had been the direct means of bringing forty persons into the church. This will give you some idea of the stuff many of our colporteurs are made of. I could add my own testimony to that of Mr. Macgowan's did time permit. We have now, thank God, a large number of most earnest and capable men engaged in this important work.

I might go on and multiply instances indefinitely in order to show the value of Bible work in China, but it is not necessary. I have said enough to show that it is a *real* work, a *great* work, and a work of the *highest value*.

Let me say a word, in conclusion, about the permanent value of the Bible. We hear a great deal these days about the higher criticism. There is a reverent higher criticism which it is impossible not to respect; and there is an irreverent higher criticism, which is not only destructive in its tendency and aim, but also full of extravagant assertions, resting not so much on ascertained facts as on the imagination of mere theorists. The Bible has nothing to fear, but everything to gain, from the higher criticism that is sober and reverent. The Bible, as the Word of God, is its own witness. *It does witness to itself*, and this is a witness which no amount of criticism can possibly gainsay. The book is full of God,

full of the Divine Christ, and full of spiritual teaching; and this it is that makes it unique among books. It is not a magnificent piece of literature merely, it is not a great religious book merely, but a definite revelation of a Saviour, a wonderful revelation of God's redemptive love and purposes; and hence its mighty power over the minds and hearts of men, and the question of dates or authorship or interpretation, all of which may be safely left to sober and reverent criticism, cannot rob it of this power.

And hence the value of this wonderful book to the Chinese also. The great need of China is the knowledge of God in Christ. Their great need is a Divine Saviour. Of sages the Chinese have many, but they have not a Saviour. In the Bible they discover a Saviour, and the very Saviour they need.

Some tell us that the world is rapidly outgrowing the Bible; but I feel sure that, as long as any practical missionary work remains to be done, the grand old volume, with its sublime revelations and glowing visions, will not cease to live and give life. Theories with regard to the Bible will come and go, but the book itself abideth for ever. There is nothing like it in the whole range of the world's literature. It is the book of books. If this book did not come from God, then, in the name of God do I ask, where did it come from?

> "Holy Bible! Book Divine!
> Precious treasure! Thou art mine!"

Such was this wonderful book to me in my childhood and boyhood; and such is this wonderful book to me to-day. Nay, it is infinitely more to me to-day than it was in those days. As I have been growing older and

older the Bible has been growing greater and greater, and to-day it stands out before my eyes as the *one* book —Divine! Peerless! Inimitable!

No weapon formed against this book has ever prospered. It is now more than a hundred years since Tom Paine predicted in New York that in five years there would not be a Bible in America. What would he say if he could pay a visit to the depositories of the American Bible Society these days? What would he say if he could pay a visit to the depositories of the British and Foreign Bible Society these days? What would he say if he could pay a visit to India, China, and Japan these days, and find those lands almost covered with the book which he had so ruthlessly doomed to swift destruction? "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment, thou shalt condemn."

Let us take courage and go on with our work of disseminating this book. Let us translate it, teach it, and circulate it. To the fathers and founders of the Bible Societies this book was no other than the Word of God, and hence their all-conquering faith and boundless hope. To their successors also this book has been no other than the Word of God, and hence the pre-eminent place which the Bible Societies hold to-day among the religious organisations of the world. Hitherto this book has been to us no other than the Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God. Let it be so still; and, with this sword in our hands, let us continue to fight the battles of our Lord until His Kingdom comes. The difficulties are many; but they shall be overcome. We are weak, but God is mighty. Error is strong, but God's

truth is stronger. The conflict may be fierce, and the foe may be strong; but the battle is the Lord's, and the final result cannot be doubtful. He *is* leading us on from victory to victory; and He *will* lead us on till every foe is vanquished and Christ is Lord indeed.

"THE WORD OF THE LORD ABIDETH FOR EVER."

IX

THE SOURCE OF POWER*

"And He spake a parable unto them to the end that they ought always to pray, and not to faint."—LUKE XVIII. 1.

THIS parable is called the Parable of the Importunate Widow. The duty enforced in the parable is that of persevering prayer. The subject to which I wish to invite your attention on this occasion is prayer, and importunity in prayer. We all believe in work. Do we all believe in prayer? Or rather, do we all believe in prayer as we do in work? We have had a very helpful convention. But what is to be the value of the convention to us in the coming months. That will greatly depend, I think, on the place which prayer is to have in our daily work, and that again will depend on the value we attach to prayer in its bearing on our spiritual life and work. If I can say anything here this morning that shall deepen our sense of the reality and importance of prayer in this respect, the time devoted to our morning meditation will not be misspent.

Prayer may be defined as communion with God, mani-

* A sermon preached at Kuling, China, at the close of a ten days' convention in 1904.

festing itself in the various forms of adoration, praise, thanksgiving, confession, and petition. These several parts of prayer are intimately connected one with another. You cannot approach God, as the infinitely great and holy, without adoring Him; you cannot adore Him without being penetrated with a sense of unworthiness and confessing your sins; you cannot confess your sins without pleading for forgiveness; and you cannot realise the blessings of forgiveness without offering up to God the sacrifices of thanksgiving and praise. The Bible abounds in all these forms of prayer. In the book of Psalms, the grandest book of prayer in the world, you have all these forms ever recurring, and often brought together in their most intimate connection. You cannot read these wonderful hymns and songs without feeling that you are breathing the very atmosphere of prayer in all its various forms.

In order to pray at all, two things are absolutely necessary, namely, faith in the existence of God and a firm conviction with regard to the personality of God. An atheist cannot pray. "He that cometh to God must believe that He *is*." To the atheist there is nothing higher than blind, resistless nature. How would it be possible for anyone holding this view of the universe to pray? It is a mental impossibility. The pantheist, or the man who believes that there is nothing but God, can no more pray than the atheist. How can a man who believes that God is everything, The All, the sum-total of Being, and that he himself is a part of Him, pray intelligently and earnestly? This also is a mental impossibility. An appeal to an infinite *something*, destitute of all personal attributes, is not

prayer. It may be poetry, but it is not prayer as taught by Jesus Christ. "After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven." That is not a prayer to *The All*, but to the God and Father of all.

But there are those who are neither atheists nor pantheists, who feel a difficulty with regard to one element in prayer. All who believe in God as a personal being can have no difficulty in accepting the elements of adoration, praise, thanksgiving, and confession. They believe in the subjective effect of prayer, in its reflex influence on the soul; and believing in this, they have no difficulty in attaching much value to it as a spiritual exercise and habit. Let the soul, they say, hold daily communion with God in these various ways, and a spiritual change must follow. A man cannot live in an atmosphere of holy communion with his Father in heaven without being gradually changed into the Divine image. Old things must pass away and all things become new. And there can be no doubt as to the value of prayer in this respect. It is undoubtedly a means of spiritual development, of promoting the full and harmonious unfolding of our spiritual sympathies and powers, of strengthening the moral nature in its conflict with the world, the flesh, and the devil. It tends, as someone has said, to raise us above the world, to fill the mind with the idea of God, and to keep us from lapsing into a lower sphere, and becoming identified with the lower order of things.

But whilst all this is plain enough to them, they find a real difficulty when they come to deal with the fifth element in prayer, the element of petition. This element

implies faith, not only in the *subjective* efficacy of prayer, but also in its *objective* efficacy, as a means appointed by God for obtaining definite blessings—blessings for ourselves and blessings for others. It implies belief in the susceptibility of God to human appeals, and in the possibility of obtaining good things from God, both temporal and spiritual, by prayer, that cannot be obtained without. Ask, and ye shall receive; ask not, and ye shall not receive.

How many feel a real difficulty. Probably there are some among ourselves who know to some extent, at least, what the difficulty is. Does God *really* hear prayer? Does God in very deed answer the petitions of His children? Is it true that God does pay any attention to the supplications of His own elect, who cry unto Him day and night? What is the use of my praying? What is the use of it to me personally, to my family, to my country, to the church, to the world at large? Questions such as these have occurred to most of us at one time or another, and some of us may have been greatly tried and perplexed as we have endeavoured to escape the difficulties by which the subject is surrounded. It must be confessed that there are difficulties, and to some minds very serious difficulties. The nature of the difficulty will greatly depend on mental training and habit. Let us look at some of these difficulties for a minute or two.

There is the *scientific* difficulty. When we ask for physical blessing, the fixity of natural law confronts us. We live under general laws, and these laws in all cases must be fulfilled unalterably. How can the reign of law and the uniformity of nature be interfered with? Natural law is fixed. What can man do, whether by word or

thought, to direct its movements? Brought up in the scientific atmosphere, many find it extremely difficult to think that man, by his desires and prayers, however intense and passionate, can in any way affect the natural course of things. Prayer for the removal of illness, prayer for rain, prayer for fair weather, prayer for a good harvest, and all such prayers, appear to many to be nothing less than gross superstition.

There is the *metaphysical* difficulty. The Divine mind is infinite, the Divine will is perfect, the Divine purposes are infallible. How can we hope to influence that mind, or change that will? How can we hope to modify the plans and purposes of the Eternal? Moreover, the fixity of law is best. How *dare* we question the Divine wisdom, or interfere with the Divine order?

There is the *experimental* difficulty. Many of my petitions have *not* been granted. This I know from actual experience. I have asked for definite blessings. I have asked for myself, I have asked for others; but the blessings have never come. I have waited long, but waited in vain. True, on the other hand, I have asked and received. But had the asking anything to do with the receiving? Was it not a mere coincidence? Would it not have been the same had I not asked at all? "Ask, and ye shall receive." Is it *really* so? Is there a *real* connection between the two? If it be so in some cases, why not in all cases? If it be so sometimes, why is it not so at all times?

And then there is the Divine method of delay. This difficulty is brought out in the parable. We all know how this tends to weaken faith in prayer and to discourage perseverance. "When the Son of Man cometh

shall He find faith on the earth?" Shall He find that kind of faith which can stand the test of long delay? Shall He find the faith which endures in importunate prayer in spite of weary waiting and adverse appearances?

Such are some of the difficulties. What is the answer? In answer to these objections I might dwell on what is called the universal instinct of prayer. That the instinct *exists* is certain, and that the instinct is *universal* is certain. A little girl was asked why she prayed to God. "I pray to God," she replied, "because I know He hears me, and I love to pray to Him." "But how do you know that He hears you?" Putting her little hands to her heart, she said, "I know He does, because there is something here that tells me so." In all lands and in all ages men have been praying, and they have been doing so because there is something here that urges them to do so. Whatever their beliefs or disbeliefs, men will pray. Mr. Frederick Harrison, who has no God but humanity, an abstraction which cannot possibly answer his petitions, is constantly advocating the organisation of worship, and urging us not to give up prayer even though we have given up God. Now, the *object* of worship may be false, and the motive in worship may be low and degrading, but the *instinct* is true, and is ever compelling the soul to go out of itself in a felt sense of want. This instinct is from God, and forms a bond of union between man and his Maker. But if the instinct is from God, prayer must be a reality. God would not have implanted it in me in order to mock me. If He has so made me that I must pray, then He must be a God who hears and answers prayer.

Now, this is a good argument as far as it goes. But to me, as a disciple of Christ, it is not *the* argument. The great argument is this: Jesus Christ knows God, and He commands us to pray, and to pray earnestly and unceasingly. We are not to be discouraged in our endeavours to obtain anything from God which we believe to be in accordance with His will. The one element in prayer which our Lord inculcates in this parable is the element of petition; and this is the one grand element in the prayer which He taught His disciples to pray. In that prayer, the model prayer, we have one invocation and seven petitions. It is made up of petitions. While the principle that our Heavenly Father knoweth what we need before we ask Him is plainly enunciated by our Lord, the duty of prayer is solemnly enforced in all His teachings.

But our Lord does not enter into any explanation of the mystery involved in the subject. As is usual in the case of such mysteries, the two apparently opposite truths are emphasised, but the reconcilement is not revealed. Neither is it necessary that it should be revealed in order to convince the Christian disciple that prayer is a reality. The fact that our Lord commands us to pray, and that He enforces the command by promises of the clearest and most satisfactory character, is to my mind an all-sufficient proof that God does answer prayer, and that prayer has a place among the forces designed by God for the working out of His purposes. Jesus Christ knows God, and He commands us to pray. This is enough in itself. We, as Christians, as disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ, really need no other argument.

There are, however, certain facts connected with prayer which we must bear in mind if we would deal successfully with the difficulties by which the subject is surrounded. Let us look at these facts for a few minutes.

First: God has never promised to give us anything in answer to prayer that is not in accordance with His will. "And this is the boldness which we have toward Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us." Nothing lies beyond the reach of prayer, except that which lies outside the perfect will of God. What is contrary to that perfect will, for that we ought not to pray. To pray for that is useless.

Second: It is God's will that we should ask, and that blessings should be bestowed in answer to our asking. "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." Such is the Divine will; such is the Divine order. There are blessings which cannot be bestowed except in response to the asking. Take spiritual blessings for ourselves as an illustration. The forgiveness of sins, the sanctification of our natures, the gifts of the Spirit—all these blessings come to us in response to the asking. "Draw nigh to God and He will draw nigh to you." "Ye receive not, because ye ask not." "If any one lacks wisdom, let him ask of God."

The same remark may be made with regard to spiritual blessings for others, for the Church, and for the world. Suppose all Christians were to give up praying. What, think you, would be the result? What would be the result to themselves individually? Would not their

spiritual life die down? What would be the result to the Church? Would not the Church lose her spiritual vitality and become powerless for good? And what would be the result to the world? Would it not sink deeper and deeper in moral and spiritual degradation? Would not its salvation become hopeless? Nay, would it not become *impossible*? "God's will," it has been said by someone, "will be done with our help or without it." Is that true? Is it true in the physical realm? God has His will with regard to the harvest; but it will never be done without the help of the husbandman. God has His will with regard to the progress of the race in material prosperity; but it will never be done without the co-operation of man. And so it is in the spiritual realm. God has His will with regard to the evangelisation of the world; but the world will never be evangelised without the co-operation of the preacher and the teacher. "It must be done by both; God never without me, and I never without God." And hence the need of work and prayer; not work without prayer, and not prayer without work.

Some would have us look upon *work* as the one thing needful. The value of work is obvious to them, but they cannot see why prayer should be regarded as indispensable. "As soon as a man is at one with God," says Emerson, "he will not beg. He will see prayer in all action." That every true action is, in a certain sense, a prayer, we may readily admit. But why should not a man beg? Why should he not ask as well as work? Work and prayer are not mutually antagonistic. They go hand in hand, and both are necessary. Jesus was one with God, and yet He did beg. He begged for Him-

self and He begged for His disciples. Paul lived in close fellowship with God, and yet he was ever begging—begging for himself, and begging for the churches. Luther was a tremendous worker, and he was a man mighty in prayer. With what earnestness did George Müller work for the orphans of England! Yes, and with earnestness did he *beg* for them! What could George Müller have accomplished without prayer? In fact, the man who lives near to God, and who is ever striving to serve God, cannot but beg—beg constantly, beg persistently. He has learnt by personal experience how much depends upon begging, how the most precious gifts of heaven are at the disposal of the man who can beg aright, who can beg well. There is not a man among us who would not have been much richer in nobility of character and wealth of good deeds if he had learnt the art of begging of God more thoroughly. "Looking back at the end," says Andrew A. Bonar, "I suspect there will be great grief of our sins of omission—omission to get from God what we might have got by praying." Thus it is the will of God that we should ask, and that blessings should be bestowed in answer to our petitions.

Third: It is the will of God that every prayer should be offered up in perfect submission to the Divine mind. It has been said that "the true blessedness and power of every prayer lies in the fact that the soul of all genuine prayer is simply asking that God's will may be done." "Thy will be done." Apart from Thy will I have no will. Whatever desires I may have, there is one desire that dominates them all, namely, the desire that Thy will be done. I have read of a case in which a

minister, praying over a child, apparently dying, said: "If it be Thy will, spare ——" The poor mother, interrupting, exclaimed: "It must be His will, it must be His will. I cannot bear 'ifs.'" In that mother you have an example of a state of mind in which no true prayer can possibly be offered up. "Ah, God, I fall on my knees and beg Thee not to oppose this happiness. I beg Thee not even to help me, but only allow me to work without too many obstructions." In that prayer of Marie Bashkirtseff, which I read some years ago, you have an illustration of the exact opposite of what a true Christian prayer is. Let us take it for granted that all such prayers are worthless, and worse than worthless. We do not really pray when we do not ask in perfect submission to the Divine will.

But let us bear in mind that Christian submission to the Divine will does not mean a sort of passive yielding to an irresistible power, or non-resistance to the inevitable. It does not mean a sort of *can't-help-myself-ism*. It does not mean not willing at all, or simply ceasing to oppose a higher will or a stronger force. That would be a very poor thing indeed. It means the bringing of my will into active sympathy with the will of God, so that I shall find it impossible not to will what God wills, and seek what God seeks. It means to trust the Divine will at all times and in all circumstances, deeming that higher will the best.

Fourth: It is the will of God that the answer, in some cases, should be conditional on the perseverance and the importunity of the man who prays. Some object to this element in prayer. "State your case calmly," they say, "and leave it with God. Why plead? Why struggle?

Why agonise?" The reason why is this: Importunity is, in some cases, an absolute condition of success. We have a striking illustration of this in that remarkable scene in the life of Jacob, recorded in Genesis, 32nd chapter. The angel of the covenant appeared unto Jacob in the form of a man, and Jacob wrestled with him all night. And the angel said, "Let me go, for the day breaketh." And Jacob said, "I will not let thee go except thou bless me." The wrestling went on all night, and the blessing did not come till the breaking of the day. In this victorious struggle with the angel we have an example of earnest, importunate, successful prayer. But why the struggle and the delay? Was it God who needed the struggle? Was it necessary in order to overcome a reluctance in the Divine mind to bestow the blessing? Not at all. It was to test and strengthen the faith of Jacob; it was to intensify his yearnings and aspirings; it was to help him to become a fit recipient of the blessing and honour which God was waiting to confer upon him. It was Jacob who needed the struggle, not the angel. And do we not need it too? God is willing to bestow His highest blessings upon us. It is not a question of God's willingness to give, but of our preparedness to receive. May it not be necessary in the case of some of us, at least, that we should pass through an experience similar to that of Jacob's at Peniel in order to become fit recipients of God's highest gifts? Think you that God will bestow the best gifts of heaven upon a man who has no appreciation of their value? The pearl of great price can never become ours unless we are prepared to sell all that we have and buy it. Again, God wants to save China. But let me tell you what I

think. It is my firm conviction that if China is ever to be saved, the missionaries in China, and God's people throughout the world, must pass through a Peniel experience on behalf of China. The pleading, the wrestling, nay, the agonising element will have to enter more powerfully into our prayers if we would see this great people turning to God. It is very much easier to work than it is to pray. Most of the missionaries are earnest workers. But are we all that we should be in the matter of prayer? Let us not suppose that any sort of praying will do for China. We must all wrestle with God. "I will not let Thee go unless Thou bless China." It must come to this if the conversion of the Chinese is ever to be an accomplished fact. Such is my conviction.

Let me remind you that the greatest importunity is not incompatible with the profoundest submission to the Divine will. You remember the prayer of our Lord in the garden. And He kneeled down and prayed, saying, "Father, if Thou be willing, remove this cup from Me; nevertheless, not My will, but Thine, be done." "And being in agony he prayed more earnestly; and His sweat became as it were great drops of blood falling down upon the ground." Here we have the intensest importunity; and here we have also the most perfect submission to the Father's will. "If it be *possible*, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt."

There are men who will tell you that the two are not compatible. They will tell you that perfect resignation is opposed to all manifestation of feeling, that the perfectly resigned man is a man in whose breast all

private desires and all natural affections are dead. Such is not the lesson I learn from the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. That may be stoicism, but it is not Christianity.

With these facts and principles before us, let us once more look at the difficulties. And, first, let us consider the scientific difficulty—the uniformity of nature and the reign of law. But why should nature and her laws stand in God's way in the matter of answering prayer? God is personal, God is infinite, God is above nature, nature is His creation. Whilst we believe in the Divine immanency in all nature, we are equally convinced of the divine transcendency beyond it. This being the case, why should not God be able to answer prayer? Man is able to use nature's laws, and work out results far beyond the power of unaided nature. Take this church in which we are now assembled as an illustration. Nature could never have built up this place of worship. If *man* can use nature's laws, and work out results beyond the power of nature, why should not *God* be able to do so? And why should not God be able to work out results far beyond the power and capacity of man? Nay, why should it be deemed impossible for God to lay these laws aside altogether, and work independently of them? If there is any truth in our Lord's miracles, it is certain that He answered prayer again and again in a way that was both superhuman and supernatural. Why should not God be able to do so now? Why should He not be able to do so always? Once postulate God, once assume that God is personal, that God is infinite, that God is not only *in* but *above* nature, that God is love, and all things come within the plane of the credible.

Let us grasp this great truth, and the scientific difficulty will vanish.

I do not deny the reign of law, or the uniformity of nature. If there were no such order, there could be no science, and no certainty about anything. But I do deny that what we *define* as the order of nature is so fixed and so all-embracing, that we have the right to regard it as the limit set to the Divine action. Our scientific generalisations are useful in their way; but they do not cover the whole mystery of being, neither have they any claim to infallibility. The generalisation of yesterday is repudiated to-day, and the generalisation of to-day will be repudiated to-morrow. A very interesting article appeared some time ago in the London *Spectator* on "The Widening of Man's Horizon," in which the writer refers to the undoubted fact that recent discoveries in science have apparently contradicted or reversed what have hitherto been supposed to be natural laws. Allow me to give you one or two extracts from this article. The writer says: "The last few years have brought us discoveries which, if only because of the rapidity with which one has followed upon another, and because of the apparent contradiction or reversal of what have hitherto been supposed to be natural laws, certainly deserve to be called unparalleled. They need not all be enumerated here; but the liquefaction and solidification of air, the light cure of lupus, the Röntgen rays, the Marconi system of wireless telegraphy, and, lastly, the discovery of the properties of radium—all these make up a list unequalled, we should suppose, by the discoveries of other decades." Then the writer goes on to say: "It happens in the case of every fresh discovery in physics

that there is a certain subversion of our ideas as to what is and what is not possible. In the latest case of discovery, namely, the mystery of radium, the subversion is greater than has been common. Radium appears to be a substance that subverts, as far as they are at present comprehended, the laws of heat. It seems to be able to attract and generate heat in a method peculiarly its own, and as yet it is not fully understood exactly what the new law may be which it will be necessary to frame." Thus, things which would have been declared impossible ten or twenty years ago, as contradicting natural law, are found to day to be among the verified facts of nature. Our knowledge of nature is ever extending; and this increasing knowledge is a stern rebuke to those who see in their ever-shifting generalisations an absolutely fixed order of law, which sets a limit to the Divine action, and excludes prayer as unscientific and worthless.

And I do deny that, whilst every human will, every personality, is ever interfering with what we call the order of nature, ever modifying it and adapting it, and ever producing results which nature, left to herself, could never produce—whilst all this is the case, whilst man can do so much, I do deny that God can do nothing. Shall God be less than man? Is it not absurd to suppose that where the human will is so potent, the Divine will is powerless? My human friend can hear my prayer, and give me help in response to my petitions; but God, the Divine Friend, the God in whom I live, move, and have my being, is so bound by nature and the laws of nature, that He can do nothing for me, however great my need, and however distressful my cry. Anything

more absurd than that it is impossible to imagine; as it is impossible to imagine anything more opposed to the teachings of our Lord.

Have you observed that the scientific difficulty has no place in the teachings of Jesus Christ? He does not refer to it even. Indeed, it is impossible to conceive how He could have referred to it. To His mind there could be no difficulty on the Divine side. The Father to His vision is Lord of heaven and earth. Nature and nature's laws are under His sway. There is nothing impossible to Him. Our Lord does speak of difficulties in connection with prayer, and very serious difficulties; but the scientific difficulty is not among them. The difficulties of which He speaks are on man's side. He speaks of the want of faith as a difficulty, of the want of perseverance as a difficulty, of the want of union with Himself as a difficulty. According to His teachings, it is the absence of these that causes prayer to remain unanswered, never by reason of science which makes it impossible.

Now let us look at the metaphysical difficulty. How can we hope to influence the Divine will? How can we hope to change the Divine mind? In answer to this question it is sufficient to state that the objection is based on a misconception of the meaning of prayer. In prayer it is not God's mind that is changed. It would be a sad thing for us all if the Divine mind could be changed by any effort of the human will. Think of mortal man being able to hypnotise God, of being able to turn God into a machine with which to work out his own plans and purposes! But whilst man cannot change the mind of God, I hold that there is in God's dominion room

given for the play of the human will, and for the exercise of prayer. Within this sphere there is abundance of scope for work *and* prayer, for the one as truly as for the other. Within this sphere the language of God to you and to me is: "You do this, and I will do that; ask, and I will give; knock, and I will open the door unto you." God's mind is fixed on this condition. It is the man's mind that is changed in prayer, and brought up to the mind of God.

Let us now look at the experimental difficulty. "Many of my petitions have never been answered." Now, I maintain that God does listen to every sincere prayer, and that every true prayer is answered. It is a mistake to speak about God as answering so many prayers, and not answering so many prayers, according as He gives or does not give the very things we ask for. That is the heathen way of looking at the matter. We, as Christians, ought to know better. I, in my ignorance, ask for a stone, and my Heavenly Father gives me bread. Is that not an anwer to my prayer? Is it not the *true* answer? If He in His wisdom and love does not give according to my asking, but dealt with me according to His knowledge of what is best for me, shall I say He does not answer my prayer? "There was to me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet me. Concerning this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee, for my power is made perfect in weakness." The apostle's prayer was not answered *literally*—not in the exact form in which he presented it. But was it not answered, and answered gloriously, in the assurance given him of grace sufficient to support him in the trial

which he was feeling so keenly? Was not that a true answer? Was it not the highest and best answer? Let the apostle himself tell us what he thinks: "Most gladly, therefore, will I rather glory in my weakness, that the strength of Christ may rest upon me." If this thorn, if this weakness, is a condition of bringing the strength of Christ as a glory down upon me, then let it remain. Instead of wishing it away, I will *glory* in it, and not in this weakness only, but in all the weaknesses I am called upon to bear, that the strength of Christ may rest upon me, *tabernacle* upon me, cover me all over. That is Paul's view of the answer given to his prayer. How true! And how beautiful!

And, lastly, let us look at the difficulty arising from the Divine method of delay. On this point there is only one remark that I think it necessary to make, namely, that the delay is always for some wise purpose. There is always a reason for it in the mind of God. It may be for my own good, it may be for the good of others. The interests of Christ's kingdom may require it, the glory of God may require it. "And the sisters sent unto Him saying, Lord, behold he whom Thou lovest is sick. When Jesus heard it, He said, this sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son may be glorified thereby. Now, Jesus loved Martha and her sister, and Lazarus. When, *therefore*, He heard that he was sick, He abode at that time two days in the place where He was." How strange! Why did He not hasten to Bethany in response to the urgent petition of the sisters whom He so much loved? That is what we should have done. But that is precisely what He did not do. And why? There is only one answer to this

question. The glory of God required the delay. Besides our praying, besides our working, there is another great factor—the will and purpose of God. The reason of the delay may not be revealed to me, but whether revealed or not, I know that it is thus in the mind of God, and that is enough. God *knows* what is best, and He *alone* knows what is best—best for me and best for all concerned, best for to-day and best for all the days that are to come, best for time and best for eternity. The man who knows God, and believes in His imperishable love, will trust Him implicitly, both with regard to the gift itself and the time of its bestowal.

> "Choose for us, God! Nor let our weak preferring
> Cheat our poor souls of good Thou has designed;
> Choose for us, God! Thy wisdom is unerring,
> And we are fools and blind."

Let me, in conclusion, make three remarks. And, first, God hears and answers every true prayer. "Good prayers," says someone, "never come weeping home. I am sure I shall receive what I ask, or what I should ask." Ask, and ye shall receive, if not the very thing asked for, then something higher and better. God's ear is ever open to the cry of His children. He wants them to look up to Him as their Father, and tell him everything. He wants them to be anxious for nothing, but in everything, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, to make known their requests unto Him.

Again, God gives good things, and only good things. He will not give us what is not good for us, however earnestly we may, in our blindness, ask for it.

"When, yesterday, my boy, with childish glee,
Came into the garden bold and free,
He begged that I would give to him
The pruning knife, so bright, so keen,
So gleaming in the sun.

Knowing full well those tender fingers
Were unskilled to use the blade,
I gently, but firmly, his request declined,
And on the grass in passion he threw himself,
And sobbed, and sighed, and blamed
My cruelty.

So many times we make request to Heaven,
But God, in answer to our prayers,
Gives not what we ask, but what we need.
We have asked amiss—the way seems hard,
But He has saved us from the care
By kind denial of our childish prayer."

"If ye then, being evil, know how to give *good* gifts to your children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven give *good* things to them that ask Him?" How much more! I cannot tell how much more. Infinitely more! If there be a Father in heaven, He must listen to the cry of His child. The child may not know what he wants, but the Father knows, and that is enough. "No *good* thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly."

Once more. Among the good things which our Father gives, the best things of all are spiritual blessings, and these are the things we ought to covet most, and seek with greatest ardour. The highest petitions are for spiritual blessings—for likeness to God, for communion with God, for the entire sanctification of our being, for power in service, for the salvation of men, for the triumph of Christ's kingdom in the world. "Seek ye first the

kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." That is the Divine order. Let it be ours, and God will never fail us.

Let us, then, pray and never be discouraged—pray always and never faint. "Let prayer be," as Matthew Henry says, "the key of the morning and the bolt of the evening." Let us pray for ourselves and pray for others; pray for our own lands and pray for all lands; pray for our own church and for all churches; pray for our own mission and for all missions; pray for our own people and for all the peoples that on earth do dwell. Let us take the whole world into our hearts, and let us take the whole world into our prayers. "I need not tell you," said Horace Bushnell on one occasion, "for whom we prayed, or for what we prayed. Suffice it to say that we forgot nothing which we loved, or what we could think of as dear to Christ." "*What we could think of as dear to Christ.*" What a scope for prayer!

Let us, then, pray on—kneel on. "Prayer," says someone, "is the greatest thing in the world." And so it is. It brings us face to face with God, it transforms us into the image of God, it links our earthly feebleness to the very might of God. Prayer brings health to the soul. The prayerless soul is a sickly soul. Disease, we are told, is contagious. But is not health contagious too? And what so contagious as the health of God's countenance! By communion with God in prayer we become partakers of the Divine holiness, we become partakers of the very health, the very wholeness of God.

The prayerless man is necessarily a Godless man. "God," says someone, "fades out of the life of the man who does not pray."

The prayerless man is a weak man, and doomed to failure. But that man wields a mighty power who has learnt the secret of instantly and directly going to God, and of holding face communion with Him. The enemies of Luther were wont to say that he could obtain anything from God, and Mary, Queen of Scots, was accustomed to say that she feared the prayers of John Knox more than she did the fleets and armies of Elizabeth. Brethren, what think you would be the result if the whole Church of God were to resolve to make proof of the last possible efficacy of prayer on behalf of the heathen world? The result, I verily believe, would be astounding.

Again, I say, let us pray on. Heed not the difficulties by which the subject is surrounded, but pray on. Heed not the disappointments connected with the work, but pray on. Heed not the doubts of the sceptic, the contempt of the proud, or the sneer of the fool, but pray on. Pray on! Kneel on! Let us do this, and prayer will become a greater reality to us, and a greater joy to us, day by day. It will become to us as the very atmosphere in which we live, as the very air we breathe. We cannot live without prayer. Cease to pray, and, as a Christian, you cease to live.

"Prayer is the Christian's vital breath,
The Christian's native air;
His watchword at the gate of death,
He enters Heaven with prayer."

[redacted]

E.—In the year of Dr. John's 1905, the L. M. S. work in Cen- na extended into 32 counties: 17 n Hupeh and 15 in Hunan. It be noted that each of the cities n the map represents a county, e cities of Changsha and Heng- ıth represent two counties.

e were in all over 8,000 Church s worshipping in 150 Chapels; ere grouped about seven head- ;—Hankow, Wuchang, Hiaukan oshih in Hupeh; and Changsha, n and Hengchow in Hunan. aries reside at the head stations perintend the work in the sur- g district.

listance from the most northern ıost southern station is 400 miles.

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GEORGE PHILIP & SON LTD

YEARS IN CHINA."

ission of the Religious Tract Society.

X

THE GOSPEL IN HUPEH

"For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries."—1 Cor. xvi. 9.

My missionary career covers more than fifty years. The first five or six years were spent at Shanghai and other places in the vicinity of that port, and the rest of the time has been devoted to the task of establishing the work in connection with the London Missionary Society in Central China. I have no time on this occasion to dwell on my experiences at Shanghai. Allow me to take you at once to Hankow, and tell you something about the work as it has been carried on at that great centre.

It was our second treaty with China, concluded at Tientsin in 1858, and which came into full operation in 1860, that opened China. That treaty did more than add nine new ports to the preceding five, it threw the whole country open so far as the right of travel is concerned. Both missionaries and merchants were transported with joy when it became known that the great Yangtsze was thrown open to foreign merchant ships, and that Hankow was included among the ports open to trade. The merchants rushed up one after another in rapid succession, and in the most business-like fashion took possession of the three newly-opened ports in the

name of King Commerce. The Church, I am sorry to say, was not equally ready to take possession of them in the name of the Lord. There were only two missionaries prepared at the time to enter in, and they were two missionaries of the London Missionary Society, the Rev. Robert Wilson and myself. The honour of establishing the first Christian mission in the valley of the Yangtsze belongs to the London Missionary Society.

I well remember with what joy, on the 9th of June, 1861, I stepped on board the *Hellespont*, the steamer that was to take Mr. Wilson and myself to Hankow. I well remember how I felt when ascending the Yangtsze, as if a new world was bursting on my vision; and I well remember how thankful we both were that that magnificent stream had become a highway to the messengers of the cross. I had never seen such a river before; and its vastness impressed me deeply and solemnly with an idea of the vastness of everything connected with it—the vastness of the region through which it flowed, the vastness of the population which lived on its banks, and, above all, the vastness of the enterprises which had for its aim the uplifting of that vast population out of its moral and spiritual degradation, and the turning of that moral wilderness into a garden of the Lord.

It would be impossible for me to describe my feelings when I found myself actually at Hankow. We arrived late in the evening, and I had time to reflect before going on shore. I could hardly believe that I was standing in the very centre of the China that had been hermetically closed against the outer barbarian for so long a period; and that it would be my privilege on the very next day to appear as a missionary of the cross in

the streets of the famous Hankow. I thought of the great and good men who had been longing to see what I was seeing, but did not see. I thought of the pious Jesuit, Valignani, exclaiming in sadness, as he gazed on the mountains of China, "O, mighty fortress! When shall these impenetrable brazen gates of thine be broken through?" I thought of Milne, who, on his arrival in China in 1813, knocked earnestly for admittance, but was ruthlessly driven away. I thought of Morrison, who knocked perseveringly for twenty-seven years, but died without receiving the promise. I thought of Medhurst, and remembered the last prayer I heard him offer up at Shanghai, just before leaving for England: "O God, open China, and scatter Thy servants." I thought of these and many others, who had laboured long and well in the Master's cause in the Far East, and felt as if they were present on the occasion, beholding my joy and rejoicing with me in the triumph of Divine Providence over China's exclusiveness.

The Tortoise Hill.—In the immediate vicinity of Hankow there is a little hill, some two or three hundred feet high, which commands a very fine view of the three cities, Wuchang, Hanyang, and Hankow, also of the Yangtsze river and the surrounding country. It is called the Tortoise Hill, because the Chinese fancy they can see in its conformation some resemblance to that reptile. Taking our stand on the back of the Tortoise, and facing the east, we have Hankow on our left, with the river Han flowing between; in front of us is Wuchang, with the Yangtsze flowing between; and on our right is Hanyang.

I need hardly describe Hanyang. Being a prefectural

city, it is politically a place of considerable importance, and has its complement of temples and official residences. It has also two suburbs of considerable size. Compared with Hankow, however, it is a small place, and of no great commercial importance. The Viceroy's iron works and other works, situated between the Han and the Tortoise Hill, have in recent years greatly added to its importance.

Wuchang is a large city, and famous in Chinese history. It is the capital of the province of Hupeh, and the seat of the Viceroy of the two provinces Hupeh and Hunan. A ridge of hills runs right through from east to west, dividing the city into two halves. It is called the Serpent Hill, from its supposed resemblance to the serpent. I have no time to speak of Wuchang's cotton mills, benevolent institutions, temples, official residences, colleges and schools, flower gardens, &c., &c. I will only add that its population is somewhere between 200,000 and 300,000. But though beautifully situated, and though politically one of the most important cities in the empire, commercially it has always been eclipsed by Hankow, the greatest native mart in the whole of China.

Hankow is not a great manufacturing place, but a magnificent mart, where merchants from all the provinces assemble in large numbers, and where the products of the whole country are stored and redistributed. The principal street is more than five miles in length, and all the streets are thronged from morning till night with a busy population. The river Han is crowded with boats of all kinds and from all quarters. At times it presents to the view a perfect forest of masts. The yearly number

of native boats and junks visiting Hankow, amounts to about 24,000, with a total tonnage of about 1,000,000, and it is estimated that they carry about 165,000 men. The name Hankow means "the mouth of the Han," and the mart is so called on account of its situation. The river Han is the making of Hankow. The population of Hankow is supposed to be about 800,000. Hankow is called by the Chinese "the centre of the empire," "the mart of nine provinces," and by other grandiloquent names. It is in touch with the entire province of Hupeh, a province covering an area of more than 70,000 square miles, and possessing a population of more than 34,000,000 souls. Every part of that vast territory is easily accessible from Hankow. Moreover, it is in touch with every province in the empire. The whole empire may be influenced to a considerable extent from Hankow.

These three cities—Wuchang, Hanyang, and Hankow—form one grand centre in the very heart of China, whose united population is somewhere between a million and a million and a half.

The Yangtsze is unquestionably the grandest object presented to our view as we stand on the back of the Tortoise. Even at Hankow, a distance of nearly 700 miles from the sea, it flows in a channel of about one mile in width. It takes its rise in the elevated region of Tibet, flows through seven provinces, and disembogues into the sea at the close of a journey of nearly 3,000 miles. With the exception of a few weeks in the year, while the water is at its lowest mark, its great body and depth afford ample room for the largest steamers as far as its confluence with the Tung-ting lake, distant from the sea 818 miles, and for vessels of a smaller kind up to I-Chang,

a distance of 1,094 miles from the sea. But it is navigable far beyond I-Chang. I myself have ascended it in native boats as far as Sü-Chow-Fu, a city distant from the sea 1,700 miles, and I might have proceeded hundreds of miles beyond. In whatever light we contemplate this mighty stream, it must be regarded as one of the richest rivers in the world—richest in navigable waters, richest in affluent tributaries, richest in wide margins of cultivated land of exhaustless fertility, richest in mighty cities and industrious human beings. The seven provinces through which it flows possess an aggregate population of more than 200,000,000. But this is not all. With this river and its numerous affluents at our command, we may with ease pierce those provinces which lie on the north and south of those which line its banks, and without much difficulty cross the confines of China proper and penetrate Tartary and Tibet.

Such is the sphere in the midst of which Mr. Wilson and myself found ourselves when we arrived at Hankow on the 21st of June, 1861. Dr. Mullens paid a visit to Central China in 1865. I took him to Wuchang, and led him to the top of the Serpent Hill, which commands a magnificent view of the three cities and the surrounding country. When we reached the highest peak, I asked him to look around. He did so; and after gazing for a few minutes in perfect silence, he said: "Well, this is a wonderful sight. I have seen nothing like it in the whole of India." When I arrived at Hankow I felt as if I had reached the height of my ambition. There are moments in every life when joy does rise to ecstasy; and such was that moment in my life.

Our first experiences at Hankow.—The first thing to

do on our arrival was to secure temporary lodgings. Through the kindness of some of the officials we were introduced to a Ningpo merchant who had a large house of business in one of the principal streets of Hankow. This gentleman took us in and treated us with much hospitality. The next thing to do was to find a house in which we might live with our families for two or three years. We had not to wait long before a Su-Chow man came forward and offered us his house. We went to see it and found it situated in a dark narrow lane and in the midst of surroundings which defied all sanitary laws. It was, however, the best we could find, so we took it thankfully and tried to make it habitable. I don't think the greatest stickler for cheap missions would have thought that house too good for us. The loft was turned into rooms for our own use. The Wilsons had two small rooms and a box-room on one side, and we had two small rooms and a box-room on the other side. The roof of our bedroom was low and sloping, and I, though not a tall man, could easily touch the boarded ceiling at its lowest end without standing on tip-toe. The hall on the lower floor was turned into a chapel for daily preaching and Sunday services, and the side rooms were turned into studies and servants' quarters. In the winter the house was severely cold, and in the summer it was burning hot. During the two years I lived in it I lost two children, and had I been compelled to stick to it my missionary career, instead of being a career of more than fifty years, would probably not have been one of twenty. But God was with us at Kung-tien (that is the name of the house), and perhaps there are no two years of my missionary life on which I

can look back with greater joy and thankfulness than the two years spent in that dingy lane.

It was a glorious time for preaching. The doors were thrown open every day to the public, and every day the hall was crowded with eager listeners. The report went abroad that a foreigner was at Kung-tien, who could not only speak the language, but actually preach in it. Such a thing had never been seen in Central China before. Could it be true? It was a great wonder, and the wonder drew crowds from all parts of Hankow and the surrounding country. Many were greatly perplexed as to what to make of the preacher. "What think you?" they would whisper to each other, "Is he a real devil?" (that is, a real foreigner). "Is he not a false devil?"

"I am sure he is not a real devil. He is a Cantonese. Look at his dark hair and dark eyes. Look at his ears! That face is not the face of a foreign devil, and those ears do not belong to a barbarian." "True! But look at his nose! That is not the nose of a Chinaman." That is only a specimen of the talk that was constantly going on among my hearers. But it mattered not; the great thing was to get them to come together, let the motive be what it might.

At the close of the first year's work nine adults had been baptised and three children. Of those nine two became native pastors, two became native evangelists, one became a school teacher, and one became the wife of one of our native evangelists at Wuchang. The church at Kung-tien was a small one, but I doubt if a church so small, even in England or Wales, has turned out so many workers of such sterling worth. But this is not all. Tens of thousands heard the Gospel for the

first time during the two years we lived at Kung-tien, and from that time till now it has been our constant joy to learn from candidates for baptism that they trace their first impressions to the daily preaching carried on in that dark gloomy building more than forty-five years ago.

Secular Work.—During our last year at Kung-tien much precious time was given to secular matters connected with the establishment of the mission, such as purchasing land and superintending the erection of buildings. We have to look after these things ourselves in China, and Mr. Wilson and myself spent hours every day in watching the workmen, in order to prevent their driving piles of two feet long instead of seven, and building hollow instead of solid walls. Our chapel was opened on the 19th of July, 1863, and I moved into my house on the 22nd of August of the same year.

First the chapel, then the house.—That chapel was not built with "the few remaining bricks." My beloved colleague never occupied his house, having died on the 12th of August. Mr. Wilson was one of the most estimable of men. He possessed the heart of a genuine missionary, and would have made one of the best missionaries in China. He had been studying the language with diligence and success; but just as he became equipped for his life-work he was suddenly cut down, and I was left to carry on the work alone for the next two years and a half, when I was joined by Mr. Bryant.

Our First Chapel in Hupeh.—Our first chapel in Hupeh was called the Kia-kiai Chapel, being situated in the Kia-kiai street. Its position is central for the whole of

Hankow. It would have been impossible to pitch on a spot better adapted for our purpose. The Kia-kiai Chapel is the first chapel ever put up in Central China, and as such we have a peculiar affection for it. It is a very unpretentious building. It would not be thought much of in this land of magnificent cathedrals and fine churches. But the number of people who have heard the Gospel in that plain meeting-house for the first time is immense. It has also been the spiritual birth-place of not a few of the best and most earnest men the Church in Central China can boast of.

Breaking New Ground.—Feeling that the mission had been fairly established at Hankow, I began to look wistfully in the direction of Wuchang, Hanyang, and other cities in the province of Hupeh. Whilst living at Kung-tien I made an attempt to start a work in Wuchang, but failed through the machinations of the officials. At the close of 1863 I renewed the attempt, and after a hard fight of several months I succeeded in carrying my point. It was a signal victory, and a victory of great practical value to the missionary work in Central China. The aim of the officials was to keep the barbarian out of the provincial capital and confine him to Hankow the Treaty port. Had they succeeded then it is highly probable that we should not have been able to get into Wuchang for many years. But it was their turn to fail this time. On July 16th, 1864, the officials themselves handed the land over to me with all the deeds signed and sealed, and by April, 1865, the mission buildings, consisting of a chapel, two schoolrooms, a house for the native evangelist, and a small house for the foreign missionary, were completed. The land and

buildings cost about £500, and the entire sum was subscribed by my friends in the Hankow community. The whole was a gift to the Society.

The Wuchang battle is typical of the many battles fought by us in Central China. From the year 1860 to the year 1900, almost every attempt to advance met with the most determined resistance. It was the policy of the officials everywhere to restrict missionary operations to the Treaty ports, and every effort to break through was frowned upon and sharply contested. The progress during this period was remarkable; but it was in spite of much opposition and many trials. The contest, however, generally ended in the triumph of the missionary and the discomfiture of the mandarin.

Missionaries Settling in Wuchang.—Mr. Bryson took up his abode in Wuchang in 1867, and I settled there with my family in 1869. Mrs. John was the first foreign lady to live in that famous city. Our house was a small low building, consisting of three tiny rooms, and no verandah. It was neither commodious nor comfortable. In the summer it was unbearably hot, and whilst we lived in it we lost one of the loveliest of our children. Still, of the many happy months I have spent in China, I look back upon the eighteen months spent in that little house as among the happiest. *It was a great joy to find ourselves in possession of the very capital of the province.*

We commenced work in Hanyang in 1867, and thus the three cities were, in spite of all opposition, occupied within six years of my arrival at Hankow. We began to work in Hiau-Kan in 1876, and a noble work for God has been going on in that county for about thirty years.

Since that date, we have been taking possession of one county after another, and now we are working in seventeen of the sixty-nine counties into which Hupeh is subdivided.

The London Missionary Society's Sphere in Hupeh.—The province of Hupeh is, as I have already said, more than 70,000 square miles in extent, and has a population of about 34,000,000 souls. It is much larger than England and Wales, which is only 58,300 square miles. Each county, on an average, is a little over 1,000 square miles in area, and the average population is about 500,000 souls. There is, however, a great diversity in the size and population of the counties. The seventeen counties in which the London Missionary Society is working have an area of about 17,000 square miles, and a population of about 9,000,000. Put together they have more than twice the area of Wales, and the population is about six times that of Wales. But the London Missionary Society's sphere in Central China is not confined to Hupeh. We are working in thirteen of the seventy-four counties into which Hunan is subdivided. We were working at one time in eighteen of those counties, but have retired from five in favour of other missions. Thus in Hupeh and Hunan we are working in thirty counties, having an area of about 30,000 square miles, and a population of about 13,000,000 souls. Some of these counties are occupied by the London Missionary Society alone, and some we share with other societies. And then there are several counties, in both Hupeh and Hunan, occupied by other societies in which the London Missionary Society does not work. And there are not a few counties in both provinces in which no society is

working. It is the ambition of the missionaries to take possession of every county in Hupeh and Hunan, and to cover both provinces with mission stations. Our cry in Central China is, and has been from the beginning, Hupeh for Christ! Hunan for Christ! And we shall not rest till the standard of the Cross is planted in all the cities of both provinces.

Such is the extent of the London Missionary Society's sphere in Central China at present; and I most devoutly hope that it will never grow less till the Chinese are able to take up the work themselves, and dispense with all the societies that are working there now. Moved by the Spirit of God, the missionaries have carried the flag in advance of the Churches, and there are some among the friends of the Society who would have them bring it back. But is this the time to call a retreat? Never have our prospects been so bright; never have our opportunities been so great; never has God's blessing been resting so manifestly on our work. Did our friends know at what cost our triumph in China had been won, and could they realise the bearing of those triumphs on the ultimate conquest of China for Christ, they would not call a retreat at this time.

The Work of the London Missionary Society in Hupeh.—Let me now try and give you some idea of the work we are carrying on in Hupeh. When I arrived at Hankow in 1861, there was not, in connection with the Protestant Church, a single missionary or a single convert in all Central China. When I left Shanghai I left behind me all the missionaries and all missionary institutions. Looking from Hankow towards the east, the nearest missionary station was Shanghai; looking towards the

south, the nearest station was Canton; looking towards the north, the nearest station was Tientsin; and looking towards the west, such a thing as a missionary station was not to be seen. But look at the present state of things. I can only speak now of the work in connection with the London Missionary Society. I do not ignore the work done by the other societies, but I cannot speak of it on this occasion.

In Hankow we have four chapels, two hospitals—one for men and one for women—a theological college, a normal school, a medical school, a high school, a training institution for women workers, and several day schools for boys and girls. Besides these four chapels, there is a chapel, or preaching hall, attached to each hospital, where the Gospel is preached regularly to the patients. And such is the case with our hospitals everywhere. In Wuchang we have two chapels, two hospitals—one for men and one for women—a large boarding school for girls, and two day schools, one for boys and one for girls. In Hiau-Kan we have two chapels, two hospitals—one for men and one for women—a training institution for women workers, day schools for boys and girls, and a leper home—the finest in China, I have been told. At Tsau-Shih we have two chapels, a hospital for men and women, and two day schools for boys and girls. At Hwang-pi we have a chapel, a school for boys and girls, and the prospect of a hospital which will rival the one at Hiau-Kan.

The stations just mentioned are our *head stations* in Hupeh, and manned by foreign missionaries. In connection with these head stations there is a large number of branch stations. We have in Hupeh more than one

hundred head stations and branch stations; and in Hupeh and Hunan we have about one hundred and fifty.

There is a fact in connection with our buildings which I ought to mention. All the schools in the interior, and all the chapels, with one exception, have been paid for by the converts, the missionaries, and the friends of the missionaries. And the same may be said of all the schools, the hospitals, and nearly all the chapels in Hankow, Wuchang, and Hanyang. They have been gifts to the Society.

The daily work carried on at the chapels, schools, and hospitals is enormous. At nearly all the chapels the Gospel is preached for hours every day. Such is emphatically the case at Hankow. Hankow is a magnificent centre for public preaching. People from all the provinces are ever pouring into the place. Many of them attend the public preaching carried on daily at the chapels. Some listen attentively, purchase Christian books, and return to their distant homes in possession of a fair knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. It is calculated that from 10,000 to 20,000 people hear the Gospel every week at the various chapels connected with the different missions in Hankow, Wuchang, and Hanyang. Missionaries passing through Hankow often tell us that they are astonished to meet with so many people in the interior who have heard the Gospel at Hankow. Though the daily preaching has been carried on steadily for more than forty-five years at Hankow, the congregations continue to be as good as ever. As to our evening congregations, they are generally crowded. On

these occasions the chapels are often crammed from pulpit to door.

And this constant preaching is not in vain. I am often greatly struck with the amount of knowledge possessed by some of our hearers, and am greatly cheered to learn that the knowledge possessed by them is to be ascribed to the daily preaching at the various chapels. A large proportion of our converts have been brought into the fold in this way; whilst the widespread knowledge of the truth which is met with these days among the people is to be ascribed largely to this agency.

I will not speak of the daily healing at our hospitals, save to say that it has been a powerful agent for good in Central China for more than forty years. Neither will I speak of the day schools. They also have had their place and have been valuable auxiliaries in connection with the all-important work of evangelising the Chinese in Central China. And I will not speak of the deep interest the missionaries of the London Missionary Society have taken in the important work of supplying China with a good, sound Christian literature. From the establishment of the Central China Religious Tract Society, in 1875, they have taken a leading part in its work, both as authors and distributors of its literature.

From what I have said already, you will infer that the missionaries in Central China do not confine their efforts to the three cities of Wuchang, Hankow, and Hanyang. Having so many out-stations to superintend and so many groups of Christians to visit, we are compelled to do a great deal of missionary touring. Our plan is to stop at each place as we pass along, and every-

where preach and sell books. This is the most productive kind of missionary touring, for by going over the same ground again and again the Gospel has some chance of finding a lodgment in the hearts and minds of the people. We do sometimes make long journeys. In 1868 I completed a pioneering journey of 3,000 miles in the provinces of Hupeh, Szechwan, and Shen-si. I have made several other long journeys, and have had the privilege of preaching the Gospel for the first time in some provinces, and in many a city, town, and village. But there is not the same necessity for these long journeys now; because every province is at present occupied by missionaries, and the most effective, as well as the most economical, plan is to leave the work of each province to the workers who are in actual occupation.

The mission in Central China has been a strong organisation evangelistically from the beginning; and I trust it will never cease to be so. About ten years since we were made to feel that the time had come when more attention should be paid to the educational department of our work. This department had not been wholly neglected; but we felt that it needed further development in order to meet the demands of the times and the requirements of our rapidly growing Church. Much time was spent in thinking out an educational scheme, and procuring the means with which to make a start. There were many difficulties on the way; but in 1899 a beginning was made, and the result has been such as to fill our hearts with deep gratitude and boundless hope. The scheme includes primary schools and high schools for boys and girls, a medical school, a normal school, and

a theological college. The whole scheme is now in full operation, and every part is instinct with life. But to work it properly and efficiently we want more men, and men specially qualified for the work. And we want proper buildings for the high school and medical school. The high school is now in building, and will in all probability be opened next year.

I have no time to dwell on the importance of the mission's having in Central China a high-class educational institution at this time. The awakening of China makes it absolutely necessary that we should be up and doing in this particular line of things. In the midst of the new life and development which we witness all around us, the Mission cannot afford to go to sleep. Our very existence will depend on our moving on in the line of the felt wants and deep cravings of the nation. The Church in China must be an educated Church, if it is to hold its own, and be a real power in the land; and the children of the converts must be thoroughly educated in the modern sense if they are to have a chance in the race of life. And thus we ought to do all in our power to influence the great educational movement of China for good, we ought to do all in our power to Christianise it, and this we can do only by turning out better scholars than the Government schools. Our normal schools, if properly worked, might do a grand work in this respect. The missionaries in Central China, and indeed all over China, are deeply anxious about this matter. We feel that we have arrived at a great crisis, and that the future of all the missions in that Empire will greatly depend on the way the crisis is met.

Just a word with regard to results. When I arrived

at Hankow there was not, as I have already said, a single Protestant Christian in Central China. Now we have in Hupeh, in connection with the London Missionary Society, more than seven thousand Church members, and in Hupeh and Hunan about eight thousand, besides a large number of adherents. There have been baptised in all, from the beginning, more than ten thousand. In some parts of Hupeh, such as Hiau-kan and Hwang-pi, our converts are to be met with everywhere. All this refers to the London Missionary Society and its work in Central China. But there are other societies working there, and they have all been successful in bringing souls to Christ. The membership connected with all the societies working in Hupeh and Hunan cannot be less than twelve thousand. But a vast amount of preparatory work has been going on in Central China. There are hundreds, nay thousands, standing somewhere between the two kingdoms, and we are constantly receiving members into our churches who have been halting between two opinions for years.

Some Specimens of the Hupeh Christians.—Not all our converts are genuine, and all who are genuine are not all that we could wish them to be. But there are sterling men among them. Let me give you a few specimens, and please take them as specimens of many more that might be given.

There is Chu Shau-Ngan, the first Protestant Christian ever baptised in Central China. Mr. Chu was a native of Ngan-Huei province, but was at the time a refugee at Hankow, having had to leave his home on account of the disturbed condition of his native province, produced by the Tai-ping rebellion. When the Rev. Josiah Cox,

of the Wesleyan Mission, came to Hankow, he applied to me for an assistant, and I handed to him this promising young man as a teacher of the language and a helper in preaching. Some time after, the troubles in his native province quieted down, and the people began to return to their homes. Mr. Chu was an heir to the estate of his father and uncle, and would have been a comparatively wealthy man if put in possession. He laid his claim before the guild of his native province located at Hankow, and they promised to consider it. They appointed a day for the hearing, and they said to Mr. Chu: "We have carefully considered your claim, and have come to the conclusion that the property belongs to you; but before we can help you to get it you must give us a promise that you will cease worshipping the God of the foreigners, and give up faith in Jesus." And what was Mr. Chu's reply? In a moment, and without the least hesitation, he said: "The property may go. I believe in Jesus, and shall worship Him all the days of my life." Mr. Chu was a young Christian then. He died some years ago a Christian of about forty years' standing. For many years he was a pastor and a faithful minister of Jesus Christ in connection with the Wesleyan Mission at Wuchang. I say that Mr. Chu was not only a genuine, but a robust, Christian. And you must judge for yourselves as to whether I am "subject to a delusion or guilty of a fraud" in making that statement.

There is Yü Ki-fang. He was received into the Church by me in 1863, when about sixty years of age. His path during the seven years which followed may indeed be compared to that of the shining light. He was a noble specimen of a Christian man. I saw no drawback in his

religious career. It is exceedingly difficult for a Chinaman to break off *entirely* from many of the habits in which he has been brought up, and in which he is so thoroughly rooted and grounded. But it is wonderful how this is done in some cases. Some of the converts seem to clear the chasm which yawns between the old and the new life in one bound, and become at once new men in Christ. Yü Ki-fang was one of these. His whole being was influenced by the truth from the beginning, and his entire character was ennobled and purified. His life seemed to me to be as spotless as that of any Christian I have ever met with, whether in China or out of China. In the infant Church at Hankow he was a great spiritual power. As a native assistant he commanded universal respect for his earnestness, diligence, and zeal. Every day, between the hours of twelve and five, he was to be found at his post in the chapel. It was stimulating even to the missionary to witness the ardour and activity of Mr. Yü in the Master's service. It was his meat and drink to serve the Lord in His temple. During his illness he enjoyed the profoundest peace and serenity of mind. He had no apprehension with regard to the future. He was constantly telling those who came to see him that Jesus was his only hope, and that he had found in Him an all-sufficient Saviour. When asked by his pastor how he felt in the prospect of death, he replied: "My sins are great; but I have a great Saviour. I die embracing the Cross." His remains were borne to the little cemetery connected with the native church by the Christians themselves, though none of them were coolies. They seem to have looked upon the dust of the venerable Yü as too sacred to be

carried to its last resting place by heathen coolies. Shall we say that Yü Ki-fang was not a Christian indeed? Shall we doubt as to whether he is or is not with Christ?

And there is Mr. Hiung, our native evangelist in charge of the Kia-Kiai Chapel for many years. Mr. Hiung's brother-in-law was one of the censors in Peking, and a man of considerable influence. For some years he had been trying to induce Mr. Hiung to leave his work at the Kia-Kiai and join him at Peking, promising to do all in his power to help him on. This temptation was resisted by Mr. Hiung in a way which reflected the greatest credit on him as a faithful servant of Jesus Christ. At last there came a letter from him to Mr. Hiung, making him a definite offer of a very lucrative post as the head of an important custom house in the province of Ngan-huei. Mr. Hiung brought the letter to me. I read it, and asked him what he was going to do. "You are in the wilderness with Christ," I said. "The devil is offering you wealth and official honour, the two things which the Chinaman covets most. What are you going to do?" "I have fully made up my mind to decline the offer," was the instant reply. "Matthew left the customs to follow Jesus; Satan wants me to leave Jesus and follow the customs. That would never do." Mr. Hiung was receiving at the time not quite Tls.7 per month—say, at the rate of exchange, a little over £1—as salary. This new position would have brought him Tls.100 per month of clean money, and the chance of multiplying this sum by three or four. Such a post in China is most lucrative. But Mr. Hiung declined the tempting offer without hesitation, and he did so in spite

of much opposition on the part of certain members of his family. His great difficulty was with his wife. Though a Christian, she could not be brought to see things at once in quite the same light as her husband. She pointed to their poverty as a reason why he should accept the offer. She pointed to the fact that he would be able to help the Church in his new position with money and influence. But Mr. Hiung was inflexible. Nevertheless, he felt the trial of this opposition on the part of his wife very keenly. "Ah," said he on one occasion, "I understand the story of Eden better now." It was simply inspiring to hear Mr. Hiung tell his experiences when passing through this time of trial. How many are there among our critics who would do what Mr. Hiung did if placed in similar circumstances? And yet we are told by these men that all the converts in China are rice Christians!

Let me give you one specimen more of the Hupeh Christians. There is Mr. Wang King-Fu. When Mr. Wang was received into our communion, in 1876, he appeared to me one of the most unpromising men ever admitted by us. By the grace of God he developed into one of the most saintly men I have ever seen in China. He was a man of prayer and an ardent student of the Bible. At the close of three years' service as an evangelist at Chung-King, Mr. Wilson wrote me a letter, giving me his estimate of Mr. Wang's character and worth. "If the Hankow Church," wrote Mr. Wilson, "had done nothing but turn out this one man, it would have been worth all the money and labour expended upon it." A heathen, who knew Mr. Wang intimately, summed up his character in one sentence: "There is no

was living six miles away from all Chinese, was devoting all his time to the foreign residents, and did nothing for the Chinese. Fortunately, the gentleman to whom our friend repeated this piece of information had just been to China, and had seen Mr. John in the midst of his work. He was able to assure him that the story was a fabrication, that there was not a particle of truth in it. The fact is, my house is placed as near the Chinese as possible, without being in their very midst. The Chinese are on one side of the street and I am on the other. It does not take me two minutes to walk from the gate of our compound to the mouth of one of the very busiest thoroughfares in Hankow. Had our friend been in China, and had he seen anything of Hankow and its vicinity, he would have known that Mr. John could not have lived six miles away from all Chinese, unless he had mastered the art of living in a balloon. As for doing nothing for the Chinese, why, I have given the Chinese more than fifty years of my life; and though I have tried to do my duty to the foreigners residing at and visiting Hankow, still the time devoted to them has been infinitesimal as compared with the time devoted to the Chinese. No doubt the man who told our friend this ridiculous story thought he was perpetrating a practical joke on a friend of missions. This is one instance, and I give it, not for my own sake, but for the sake of the public, in order that they may see how utterly absurd these hostile reports are.

Let me give another instance. A globe-trotter came to a missionary's bungalow in India in quest of entertainment. The missionary received the traveller and gave him his bedroom. There were only two rooms

in the bungalow, and the missionary slept that night on the verandah. The traveller in the morning took his leave of his host, who had entertained him *gratuitously*, and went his way. Time passed, and the missionary received a letter from the secretary of his mission, enclosing a letter from the globe-trotter, his former guest. The letter was a complaint to the directors against the missionary, who was charged with extravagant and luxurious living. "For," said the globe-trotter, "in the room where I slept there were a *number of bottles of claret.*" The missionary, in his reply to the charge, said: "I deeply regret that my guest did not open the bottles and taste the claret. He would have found that the *claret was ink!*" So much for the globe-trotter and his tales.

Cheap Missions.—I want to say a word or two on the cry for cheap missions. There are times when the cry is loud and imperious. Some years ago it was very much so, and it looked for a while as if it was going to work a good deal of mischief. I have very little sympathy with that cry, and I sincerely hope that the wise men among you will not allow themselves to be influenced by it. If the missionaries sent out by you are men of the right stamp, if they are men called of God and inspired by His spirit, is it not for the Churches to do all in their power to so provide for their wants that they shall be placed above all anxiety with regard to things temporal? Ought not the Churches to deem this a privilege and an honour? The older societies are not giving too much to their missionaries; and this I say with a perfect knowledge of the missionary's life and needs. Some seem to look on the missionaries as so many *paid* agents, not one

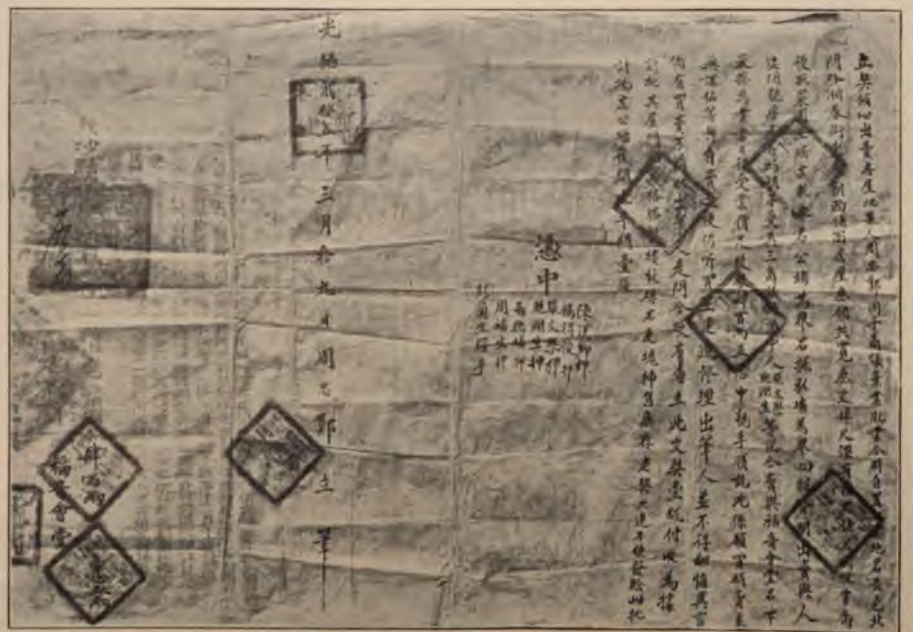
of whom is serving God for nought. They seem also to judge of a missionary's worth by the smallness of the salary he receives. This seems to be the one grand consideration which lifts a man above all suspicion. What blindness! That there may be here and there a bread-and-butter missionary I will not try and disprove. That there may be a few, who, though earnest and sincere in their intentions have mistaken their calling, I am quite willing to admit. That the missionaries, as a body, belong either to the one class or the other I utterly deny, and I know what I am talking about. My own colleagues in Hupeh and Hunan are men of whom I am emphatically proud, and of whom the Society may well be proud. The missionaries, taking them all in all, are men called of God to this high and holy ministry, to whom the work itself is a joy, and whose one ambition is to serve the Lord Christ. To them the work is intensely real, and their devotion to it is sincere and true. Speaking for myself, I can say with the utmost sincerity that I would willingly give another fifty years to the missionary life if I had them to give, and the question of salary does not enter into the calculation at all. Salary or no salary, this is my work, to live in and to die in.

Can you tell me which is the cheapest mission? I will tell you. The cheapest mission is the mission which can keep its missionaries in life longest, and get out of them the best service which they are capable of rendering whilst permitted to live. The policy of every society should be to so provide for its missionaries that they shall live as long as possible, enjoy the best possible health, and carry on their work with the best possible vigour. A missionary's success depends greatly upon the physical

and mental energy he is able to put into his work. He should be a man of force and impetus, possessing in a large measure the power of communicating motion to others. The dynamic value of his work will depend upon the dynamic energy he puts into it. But to be a power in this respect he must be properly fed and housed, and his wants must be so provided for that he shall be able to work without distraction, and with happiness to himself. The trials of the missionary life are heavy enough and numerous enough, without adding to the burden those which relate to eating, clothing, and housing.

An Appeal to Young Men.—Are there any young men in our churches, colleges, and universities who are seeking an opportunity of investing their lives to the best advantage? Let me advise them to make a choice of China and of God's work in China. They will find in that land abundant scope for any talent they may have, and for every talent they may have. Do they love preaching? China calls for the very best preachers. Do they love teaching? China calls for the most gifted educationists. Do they love writing? China calls for the ablest writers. Do they love the work of healing? China calls for the most skilful physicians. A man cannot be too good for China. The more highly qualified he is the better. There is not a missionary on the field who does not feel that he would be much more efficient as a missionary if more richly endowed as a man and a Christian. Our prospects in China have never been brighter than they are now, never so bright. There is a possibility of a new China right before us. There is no reason why China should not be evangelised before the close of this century. Everything depends on the Church.

great Empire as they present
time, and very earnestly do
them hear the Divine voice
inclined to listen and obey.



COPY OF THE DEED TO THE FIRST PROPERTY OBTAINED FOR MISSIONARY PURPOSES IN THE CAPITAL OF THE HUNAN PROVINCE, CHINA.

This astonishing deed, a sight of which will rejoice the heart of every China missionary, consists of three parts. The first is the deed proper, and gives the description of the premises (outside the N gate of the city, on the east side of the street), and the agreement to sell and to buy; next come the names of the witnesses, or middlemen, and the date, the 25th year of the Emperor Kuang-su, and so forth; and, finally, a printed form, at the left, completes the document. It is the regular form for the transfer of real estate used at the Magisterial Office of the City and County of Chang-sha.

XI

THE GOSPEL IN HUNAN

"In perils by the heathen."—2 CORINTHIANS XI. 26.

FOR many years Hunan has drawn much attention to itself. The prayers offered up on its behalf have been innumerable. It looked at one time as if our prayers were never going to be answered, as if the "Iron Gates" of Hunan were never going to open. But, thank God, the time to favour Hunan has come, and the hearts of many are made glad.

Hunan is a noble province. Its area is more than 74,000 square miles, and its population is about 21,000,000 souls. Of the eighteen provinces it is one of the richest—richest in mineral wealth, richest in navigable waters, richest in cultivated lands of exhaustless fertility. The area of the coal fields of Great Britain is estimated at 12,000 square miles, and the aggregate area of all the coal fields of the principal coal-producing countries in Europe is given by Professor Anstead at 20,720 square miles. Now that of Hunan is estimated at 21,000 square miles. That is, the area of the coal fields of Hunan is somewhat larger than that of the whole of Europe, and 9,000 square miles larger

than that of Great Britain. And the coal is of every kind and quality—lignite, anthracite, and bituminous. And this is not all. Side by side with these immense coal beds we have iron ore and iron stone in rich abundance and of the best quality. The province is rich also in timber and stone. All the timber and granite stone used in the lower Yangtsze valley comes from Hunan. It is also a well-watered province. Its four principal rivers are fine streams. In many parts the scenery is very grand. The valley of the Siang is exquisitely beautiful. It is now more than twenty-six years since I visited the Siang valley for the first time. I fell in love with it then, and I have loved it ever since. At Heng-Shan you have the celebrated Nan-Yoh, one of the five sacred mountains of China, "with its seventy-two peaks, ten famous caves, thirty-eight springs, and twenty-five streams." Thus Hunan is a little kingdom in itself, and a very rich one, too.

The people of Hunan are looked upon as comparatively brave, manly, and straightforward. They have more character than the people of Hupeh. "Hupeh men," say the Hunanese, "are made of bean curd, but the Hunan men are made of iron." The suppression of the Tai-ping rebellion is to be ascribed principally to the skill and the valour of the Hunanese. The great Tseng Kwo-fan, the deliverer of Nanking; the grand secretary Tso, the conqueror of Cashgar; and Peng, the famous admiral of the Yangtsze, were all natives of Hunan. At the close of the Tai-ping rebellion Hunan men were everywhere occupying the very highest posts as civil and military officers. And for years after there were living in the province itself a host of retired officials, many of

whom were men of great influence on account of their past services to the state as well as by reason of their high official rank. All this tended to make the Hunanese proud, exclusive, and anti-foreign to a degree that is extraordinary even in China. The hatred of the foreign barbarian was a provincial characteristic. The gentry and scholars of the province had been looking on Hunan as the palladium of the empire, and the ultimate expulsion of the foreigner was a fixed article in their creed. It was a real grievance to them to see the foreigner showing his "impish head" inside their beautiful province, and it was their fixed policy to so embitter the experiences of the intruder as to make a second visit impossible.

The Hunan Placards and Publications.—The method of procedure was generally something like this. As soon as a foreigner arrived at a place, placards were issued in great profusion by the gentry and scholars, in order to inflame the people and secure his immediate expulsion. Then an attack was made by the mob, and the unfortunate visitor had to beat a quick retreat. The placards evinced the intensest hatred. The charges brought against us were simply monstrous, and the language was often too vile for translation into any European tongue. Christianity was represented as a system which aims at the subversion of all order and as the enemy of all virtue. The foreign teachers were denounced as perpetrators of the most unnatural crimes—crimes, as far as I know, that do not exist except in China. Some of the placards closed with the proposal that a band of men be engaged to waylay the foreigners who might visit the province, and to so treat them as to render it impossible that they

should have the hardihood to return. "Should they come across a *foreign devil*," says one of these placards, "they must act as may be most expedient in the circumstances, and rob him of his money, or strip him of his clothes, or deprive him of food, or cut off his ears or nose." Exciting placards were posted up in every city of Hunan by the hundreds and thousands; and anonymous publications of the most inflammatory character were scattered over the whole province by the millions. Those publications had for their authors men of education, position, and rank. For many years the notorious Chou Han, a man holding high official rank, was at the head of the Hunan reptile press, and some of the vilest and most violent of its productions are to be ascribed to him. The effect of such a crusade on the popular mind may be easily imagined. In course of time the people were brought to look upon the foreigner, and dread the foreigner, as a veritable incarnation of everything that is monstrous in nature and vile in morals. In my travels in Hunan I have met with people who seemed much surprised to find that, in spite of all they had heard to the contrary, I looked so much like a human being. "Why! he is just like one of ourselves; only his clothes are different." Such exclamations I have often heard.

My First Visit to Hunan.—In the early days, travelling in Hunan was extremely trying, and not without danger. On my first visit, in January, 1880, I had a narrow escape at Siangtan, one of the largest marts in the province. Mr. John Archibald, of the National Bible Society of Scotland, was with me on this occasion. On our arrival at the place, we went on shore and at once began

to preach and distribute books. The people at first were quiet and well behaved; and among my hearers there were some who recognised me as a missionary whom they had seen and heard at Hankow. Presently certain officials made their appearance, and requested us to return to our boat, and come and meet the authorities who were awaiting us on board one of the gunboats hard by. There was no alternative but to go and talk matters over with them. And then our difficulties began. They tried to persuade us not to venture on shore again, as it might involve us in trouble and danger. Seeing that we were bent on going, they gave us their permission to do so, and promised protection, if we would only wait till proper arrangements were made for our safety. For some time messengers kept flying to and fro between the gunboat and the Yamen. At last our escort turned up, and I heard one of the messengers from the Yamen tell the officer in charge of the escort that, if we went on shore he must see to it that *when beaten* we were not struck on the head. That is, "Beat them as much as you like, but don't kill them." While waiting, and when everything seemed to be ready for the start, there was a sudden cry of fire, followed by a loud beating of fire gongs. We looked out, and saw smoke and flames rising from the yard of a temple right in front of us. It turned out to be a *mock* fire, got up for the express purpose of drawing a crowd. The straw fire soon died down; but it brought together an immense concourse of people, who, finding that there was no fire to attend to, began to amuse themselves in reviling and pelting us. The shouts, "Beat the foreign devils, kill the foreign devils," became uncomfortably frequent and loud. To

avoid their missiles we pulled out and anchored in midstream; and, being now late in the afternoon, we told the officials in charge of us that we would defer our landing till the morrow. They expressed themselves as highly pleased with this wise resolution of ours, and promised to be ready for us at an early hour on the following day. We then retired into the boat, hoping to spend a quiet night at Siang-tan. But it was not to be. Before the lapse of many minutes another tremendous shout greeted our ears. We went out to see what it meant, and, to our unspeakable horror, we saw a big junk sweeping down upon us, filled with buckets containing unmentionable filth, and with men well armed with long-handled ladles. It was not difficult to take in the situation. It was their intention to pour this filth into our boat, and to dose us with it as well, this being one of the methods prescribed by the Hunan scholars and gentry to keep foreigners out of the province. That was an enemy with which we could not fight; so without a second thought we got up both anchor and sail, and hurried away as fast as the wind and current could take us. We knocked at the gates of Changsha and Yochow on our way to Hankow; but found both cities absolutely closed against us.

My Second Visit to Hunan.—On my second visit, in 1883, I was again accompanied by Mr. Archibald, and we passed through some bitter experiences at Yochow and Lung-yang. Everything went well with us while travelling in Hupeh, but the moment we stepped into Hunan a great change for the worse took place. On our arrival at Yochow we were made to feel that we were in another world, and that we had to deal with elements

very much less controllable than those we had left behind us in Hupeh. We preached and sold books in the suburbs without much difficulty, but no sooner did we enter the city than the cries *beat* and *kill* began to rend the air. The pelting soon followed, and we were compelled to make a rush for the boat and be off. We left Yochow at once, crossed the lake, and reached Lung-yang late on the following day.

Early on the following morning we went on shore and began our work of preaching and book distributing. For an hour or so everything went on very smoothly, and I thought that I had never seen a people more inoffensive than the citizens of Lung-yang. But after awhile the placards began to make their appearance, denouncing the foreign barbarians and calling on the people to rise *en masse* and cast them out of the city. Soon an immense crowd gathered around us, and it was growing every moment more and more excited. The situation was becoming dangerous, and there was nothing for us but to go and see the magistrate. We went in search of the Yamen, and, with the help of the children who were following in the crowd behind, we managed to find it. The grown up people, some from fear and some from spite, positively refused to give us any help in the matter. At the Yamen an attempt was made to shut us out, and then, when we got in, to persuade us to leave without seeing the magistrate. After long waiting and much quibbling on the part of the underlings, the great man made his appearance. We were not with him many minutes before we discovered that the placards had been written in the Yamen itself, and that the men who carried them about the city and posted them on the city walls

and gates were Yamen runners. In fact, the entire plot had been hatched in the Yamen by the gentry, with the magistrate himself at their head. Very soon the large square in front of the Yamen became crowded with an excited mob. The gentry and the magistrate had succeeded in rousing the fears and rage of the people to a pitch which no ordinary method could control. The one question now was how to get back to our boat and away from the place without further molestation. The magistrate himself felt the gravity of the situation, and sent for a detachment of braves from a camp hard by to escort us to our boat. We owe it to these men that we reached our boat without being seriously injured, perhaps murdered. Even with this strong guard we escaped with difficulty. One strong fellow, a perfect cut-throat in appearance, made a rush at me in the street, and would have laid me prostrate in the gutter but for the intervention of the braves in charge. He had a stout iron bar in his right hand, and this he tried to bring down on my head twice. The braves, however, were on the alert, and the blows were warded off. The boat was reached at last, and we left the place at once. Any attempt at delay would have led to an assault on the boat, and that would have landed us in inextricable difficulties.

We proceeded up the river as far as Chang-teh, one of the largest cities in the province, with the hope that we might be allowed to enter and carry on our work within its walls. Not an official, however, would come near us, and the Prefect told us positively that he could not protect us. His letter convinced us that nothing could be done in that part of Hunan at that time, so we returned

to Hankow somewhat disappointed, but by no means discouraged. We continued to do all in our power for Hunan. Colporteurs and evangelists were sent to the province frequently, and they did good work in a quiet way, but it was hardly *safe* for the foreign missionary to attempt work there. The anti-foreign sentiment grew in intensity during the next decade, and the anti-foreign Press became more and more active and violent. It was after the lapse of fourteen years that I paid my next visit to Hunan.

My Third Visit to Hunan.—My third visit, in 1897, was full of incident and strange experiences. I had for my travelling companion the Rev. C. G. Sparham, one of my colleagues in the Hankow Mission. Our main object in going to Hunan this time was to visit a group of Christians at Hengchow, a large and important city in the Siang valley, and distant from Hankow, by boat, about 480 English miles. About twelve years ago a young man, named Wang Lien-King, was baptised at Hankow. He was at the time in the employ of a Hunan official residing at Hanyang. Soon after his baptism, the choice of renouncing his faith in Christ or giving up his situation was placed before him. Without a moment's hesitation he chose the latter, and returned to his native home at Hengchow. There, as a self-supporting evangelist, Mr. Wang began at once to work for God, and the result was the ingathering of an interesting band of Christians in this the most anti-Christian province in the Empire. Such was the beginning of the London Missionary Society's work in Hunan, and our chief aim in visiting Hunan on this occasion was to see that work and help it on. We hoped that we might be

permitted to enter Changsha, the provincial capital, on our way to Hengchow, but that was a mere hope, and we built nothing upon it. As to Hengchow, we had no doubt whatever as to the heartiness of the reception awaiting us there. One of the chief gentry of the place, a son of a late Governor of Canton, and a man of considerable local influence, had sent me a cordial invitation to come and visit him, and went so far as to say that he would be glad to have me as his guest during my stay at Hengchow. As we drew nigh to the city our hearts throbbed with high hopes and glowing visions. We were going to a place *prepared* for us, as we thought. With the people we were going to have pleasant times, and delightful intercourse with the converts. We had no apprehension of a repulse at Hengchow. Imagine, then, our disappointment when, on our arrival at the place, we found a large crowd of ruffians standing on the left bank of the river, all armed with stones and mud, and waiting our approach. No sooner did we come within reach of their missiles than the cursing and pelting began. We hastened to cross the river, and made for the anchorage in the immediate vicinity of the Bible depot, where several gunboats were stationed and under whose protection we wished to place ourselves. We sent our cards to the naval officer in charge of the gunboats, and hoped he would give us the needful help. He, however, took but little notice of us. He sent one of his gunboats to anchor alongside our boat, but he declined to pay us a visit, or send his card even. Then we knew that mischief was brewing. Nevertheless, we had a quiet night, for which we were very thankful. Early next morning the gunboat moved off, and the

space between the shore and ourselves was cleared for action. Then the hooting and pelting began. For hours the stones kept falling on the roof of our boat like hail. Crash went the window glass, crash went the crockery, and for a time it looked as if the boat itself was about to be smashed up. The Bible depot was attacked and looted. Books, clothes, and furniture were stolen. All this was going on in the presence of the magistrate, but he did not interfere. A number of soldiers were on shore when the raiding and pelting were going on, but they did nothing to prevent either the one or the other. It was my impression then that they were acting as instigators all the time, and I have no doubt of it now.

Matters were now hastening to a crisis, and we felt that a decisive step must be taken at once. We had to think of the safety of the converts as well as of our own. So, addressing ourselves to the naval officer, we said: "Can you, or can you not, protect us? If you can, do so, and put a stop to this dangerous pelting. If you cannot, please call a gunboat and have us escorted down the river." "I cannot protect you *here*," was the reply, "but I will give you two gunboats to take you down to Siang-tan." He thereupon gave his orders, and in less than five minutes we found ourselves between two gunboats moving down the stream.

Unfortunately for us, Dr. Wolfe, a German scientist, had been to Hengchow a few days before us, and had managed to arouse the animosity of the officials and the people. Our difficulties sprang in a measure from this cause. But the *main* cause was the bitterly anti-foreign spirit and policy of the *Taotai*, the highest official at

Hengchow. When the naval officer said that he could not protect us, he spoke the simple truth, for he had received his orders from his superior, and the orders were to the effect that we must not be protected *at Hengchow*.

An Interesting Story.—Now for an interesting story. On our arrival at Hengchow several converts came to see us, and we were told by their leader, Mr. Wang Lien-King, that there were between twenty and thirty candidates waiting to be baptised at the place. We felt that we could not return to Hankow without seeing something of these neophytes. Having drifted down the stream about two miles, we ordered a halt for the night. Some of the candidates were with us on board at the time, and others soon followed. The question of their baptism came up, and it was soon found that it could be solved only in one way. They begged us to baptise them. We called their attention to the circumstances in which they and ourselves were placed, and suggested delay. "You see," we said, "that we cannot protect you in the event of difficulties springing up. We are driven out of the place and are helpless to protect ourselves. What could we do for you should an attack be made on you? Had you not better wait awhile and seriously count the cost before taking this important step?" "We have waited long," was the reply, "and we cannot allow you to return without baptising us. We are not afraid of the consequences. Please administer to us the rite of baptism, and admit us into your fellowship." After some consultation with each other we resolved to comply with their wishes. We examined them carefully, and were delighted to find how well they had been taught by

Mr. Wang. We could not but feel that it was a brave thing on their part to identify themselves with us in the circumstances in which we were then placed. The examination over, we had a service, at which Mr. Sparham and myself preached, and at the close of which the rite of baptism was administered to thirteen men. In the circumstances nothing could be done for the female converts. To allow them to come on board the boat would have been suicidal, and to visit them at their homes would have been impossible. Some of the converts were away in the country and could not have been present. It was to us joy unspeakable to admit these thirteen into our communion. We have many Hunan men in the Church, baptised at Hankow and elsewhere; but these thirteen were, so far as I know, the first baptisms ever witnessed in Hunan itself. That day, the 6th of April, 1897, the forty-second anniversary of my ordination at Swansea, I shall never forget, and that evening I can never forget. It was a glorious ending to a very stirring day. If there ever has been a Bethel in this world, surely our boat was a Bethel that evening.

After the service we sat down together to a feast provided for us by the Hengchow Christians. Though we did not eat it *at* the city, as was originally intended, we ate it *in sight* of the city. "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; Thou hast anointed my head with oil; my cup runneth over."

We did not leave our anchorage till the morning of the 8th. We stayed on in the hope that the magistrates would put matters right, and ask us to return to the city. We were also anxious to reopen the Bible depôt

and put a man in charge. This we managed to accomplish. But no invitation to return came, though we did all in our power to procure it. We started early on the 8th, and reached Hankow late on the 16th, having been away twenty-six days in all, and travelled about 900 English miles.

My Fourth Visit to Hunan.—My fourth visit to Hunan was in the spring of 1899, and it was the first visit on which I was made to feel that my life was not in danger. I was accompanied by my colleagues, Messrs. Sparham and Greig. Though the missionaries were driven away from Hengchow, the native agents were allowed to remain and to carry on their work without molestation. Mr. Peng Lan-Seng was sent at once from Hankow to join the band of workers at Hengchow. Our main object in visiting Hunan this time was to inspect Mr. Peng's work, and to do what lay in our power to help it on. The accounts which had reached us of the work were so glowing that I thought it best to say nothing about it till I had seen it with my own eyes. Well, I saw it, and I can truly say that the picture drawn by Mr. Peng and others was not an exaggerated one; on the contrary, the reality exceeded our most sanguine expectations. We found ourselves, notwithstanding all that had been said, not prepared for what we saw and heard.

The journey itself was in every way a remarkable one. The round trip was 1,076 English miles. We travelled 926 miles by water and 150 by land. From first to last we were treated with the greatest courtesy and consideration by the local officials. They did all in their power to protect us and make the visit a pleasant one to us. For this we were mainly indebted to Chang Chih-Tung, the

Viceroy of Hupeh and Hunan, and to H.B.M.'s Consul-General, Sir Pelham L. Warren. But for the kindness of the Consul-General in bringing our case before the Viceroy, and the stringent orders sent by the Viceroy to the Hunan officials with regard to our comfort and safety, the journey would have been a very different one. The local authorities were, everywhere and always, all attention, and consequently the people were quiet and inoffensive. In passing from place to place we visited some cities and many towns and preached to thousands of people who had never heard the Gospel before. Some of the congregations were very large, and the rowdy element was not always absent; but we encountered no persecution anywhere, nor even trials of any kind. In China the eyes of the people are on the officials, and their conduct towards us depends on what they suppose to be the mind and policy of the officials with regard to us. On this occasion there was no mistaking of the official mind, and hence the friendly attitude of the people.

The warm-heartedness and unfeigned kindness of the converts made the journey a very pleasant one to us. The Christians everywhere gave us a right royal reception. The fearlessness, warmth, and generosity of the Hunan converts struck us as something remarkable, and made a deep impression on our minds. The multitude of candidates for baptism also astonished us, and the character and manly bearing of many of them filled our hearts with gratitude and hope. Many of them reminded us not so much of the neophyte as of the long-tried and experienced Christian.

The admission of so many Hunanese to Church

fellowship added a deep interest to the journey. There were baptised in all 192 persons, of whom 173 were adult believers. We might have baptised hundreds more, for there were many hundreds of candidates; but it seemed to us that we could not be too careful in regard to this matter at the initial stage of the work in Hunan. The 173 adult believers were admitted only after careful examination, and they may be regarded as the very pick of the candidates who came before us.

Another event of deep interest to us was the setting apart of six evangelists for six of the most important stations. One was set apart for Changsha, one for Siangtan, one for Heng-shan, one for Hengchow, one for Lei-yang, and one for Sin-Shih-Kiai. All of these men had been actively engaged in Christian work for some time; but it was on this occasion they were formally set apart for the office. In addition to these six evangelists, four men were set apart for colportage work, and definitely appointed to four definite spheres, which they were to visit regularly and work systematically. Their circuits unitedly covered seven prefectures, all situated in and around our sphere of influence in the Siang valley.

One of the most important events connected with this journey was the procuring of houses at Changsha and Siangtan for missionary purposes. We were particularly gratified with our success at Siangtan, the place from which Mr. Archibald and myself were so ignominiously driven away in 1880. It was the next thing in point of importance to our success at Chang-sha. The house is an immense building, and well situated in one of the most important thoroughfares. It was not put up for

less than seven or eight thousand taels. But, alas! a concubine of the owner had committed suicide in it, and it became a haunted house. No one would live in it, and they were glad to let us have it for about a thousand taels. Ghosts in China have often rendered us valuable service.

It was, as I have already stated, on Tuesday, April 6th, 1897, that Mr. Sparham and myself were pelted out of Hengchow by a furious mob. That was a dark day. Little did we think then that it would be our privilege to see, within so short a time, what we saw on this eventful journey. That repulse looked at the time like a failure; but we know now that it was not a failure, but a link, and a very important link, in the chain of events which has led up to the present state of things in Hunan. *But Hunan was not open.* It was opening, but not open.

My Fifth Visit to Hunan.—In the autumn of 1899, accompanied by Mr. Greig, I paid my fifth visit to Hunan. Our object in visiting the province at that time was to purchase land and houses at Yochow, with a view of establishing a head station there in connection with the London Missionary Society. I have already spoken of my trials at Yochow. Other missionaries had visited the place since that date, and all had but one tale to tell. One brother was stoned to the river bank, and managed to escape only by rushing into the stream and swimming to his boat. In the past Yochow was looked upon as one of the most anti-foreign and anti-Christian cities in Hunan. All this is now changed, and so great was the change when I visited it in 1899 that I found it impossible to realise that it was the same Yochow.

When walking through the streets of the city I often stood still and asked myself: "Can this be Yochow?" I found it difficult to believe my eyes and ears. It seemed too good to be true. The city magistrates gave us a most cordial reception. The district magistrate was the same man who treated Mr. Sparham and myself so rudely in 1897. We found him completely transformed. He treated us on this occasion with the utmost courtesy and friendliness. The people could not have behaved themselves better than they did. No stones were thrown after us, no opprobrious epithets were hurled at us, and no black looks were to be seen anywhere. We walked about in every direction, both inside and outside the city, and found the people perfectly friendly. As to houses and land, the people were not only willing, but extremely anxious, to sell. More than twenty offers were definitely made, and we went to see more than ten. It was difficult to make a choice in the midst of so many offers, but we succeeded at last in fixing on one of the best sites in the place. The deeds were taken to the district magistrate to be stamped, and he not only stamped them, but did so without charging the usual Yamen fees—in order, as his grandson told us, to show his good feeling towards us. He also issued a very satisfactory proclamation, explaining the object of our coming, and calling on the people to treat us with consideration and respect. Such was my experience at Yochow on this my fifth visit to Hunan. I need not add that I returned to Hankow with a heart full of gratitude and praise.

Mr. Peng Lan-Seng was left behind to superintend the work that had to be done on the houses just bought, in

order to fit them for the use of the Mission. As soon as they were ready, our two missionaries, Mr. Greig and Dr. Peake, left Hankow and settled at Yochow. In 1902 we retired from Yochow in favour of the American Reformed Church, and Mr. Greig and Dr. Peake moved on to Hengchow, where they have been ever since. But Hunan was not open. It was opening, but not open.

My Sixth Visit to Hunan.—My sixth visit was in May, 1900, just before the Boxer uprising. I visited Yochow, Changsha, and Siangtan, and was much pleased with what I saw of the progress of work at the three places. But I had no idea of the terrible times that were at hand. The storm was gathering, and its mutterings were distinctly heard in the north. In Central China, however, everything was quiet when I left Hankow for Hunan.

Let me give a bird's-eye view of the missionary work in Hunan at the close of the year 1899. In the south, on the Canton border, in the Lin-wu district, the American Presbyterian Mission had one station. In the east, on the Kiangsi border, in the Cha-ling district, the China Inland Mission had one station. At Changteh, in the west, the Alliance Mission, the Cumberland Mission, and the China Inland Mission had each a station. The work of the London Missionary Society lay mainly in the Siang Valley. It had already extended into nine counties, or districts, and in these counties there were seven central mission stations and fifteen branch stations. We had taken possession of, and were holding property in, seven walled cities. There were in all twenty-three places of worship, of which six were provided by the Society and seventeen by the converts themselves. At

and around the various mission stations there were about two hundred baptised Christians and a large number of inquirers. Over all this work there were two foreign missionaries, and seven paid native evangelists. Among the evangelists the most prominent was Mr. Peng Lan-Seng, who during the preceding two or three years had proved himself to be a real apostle to his people. I think you will agree with me that this was a very remarkable growth. But Hunan was not open. It was opening, but not open.

My Seventh Visit to Hunan.—My seventh visit to Hunan was in April, 1901, accompanied by Messrs. Sparham and Greig. We went to Changsha by one of the ordinary steamboats running between Hankow and that city. From Siangtan we were conveyed up to Hengchow in the Governor's private steam launch. The suppression of the Boxer movement had made a deep impression on the popular mind, and wrought a great change in the official attitude. Our reception by the authorities everywhere was most enthusiastic. At Changsha, Siangtan, and Hengchow, they overwhelmed us with kindness. We had abundant opportunity for preaching to large and attentive audiences, and our hearts were filled with joy and gratitude to God as we observed the growth of the work in spite of the fierce trial through which it had passed. We moved freely among the people of Hengchow, and were received everywhere with every mark of respect. We went to see the site on which our chapel stood before its demolition in July, 1900; and there we found the bare ground and nothing else. There was not a stone or a brick or a bit of timber to be seen. The whole building had been pulled down, and everything in

the shape of materials carted away. We found the same state of things at Hengshan; and we were told that such was the state of things at all our stations in the Hengchow prefecture. The London Missionary Society had in that one prefecture between twenty and thirty places of worship. All, without a single exception, were completely destroyed. In this, as in most things, the Hunanese had shown their thoroughness. They do not do things by halves. The Sunday spent at Hengchow was a day never to be forgotten. A goodly number of Christians, residing in the country round about Hengchow, had heard of our arrival, and they came in to see us. We had two services, at both of which Mr. Sparham, Mr. Greig, and myself preached. At the close of the morning service twenty-eight persons were baptised, and at the close of the afternoon service nine more were added to their number. Though many of the Christians had suffered terribly during the Boxer trouble, none of them seemed to cherish a spirit of revenge. It was very interesting to listen to their tale of suffering; but still more interesting to learn that in the hour of trial they were able to manifest the Christian spirit so fully.

The one great fact impressed upon our minds on this journey was this: *Hunan is open.* I had longed for many years to be able to pen that sentence of three words, but could not do so till this visit. Once and again I had said, during the previous four years, that Hunan was opening, but never till then was I able to say that it was actually open. Need I say that I returned to Hankow with a heart full of joy and gratitude as I thought of the great things which the Lord had done *in* and *for* Hunan?

The Governor kindly gave us his steam launch to take

us back to Hankow. The round trip to Hengchow and back is about 900 English miles, and we did it in two weeks. Without the launch it would have taken us six or seven weeks. We called on the Governor and thanked him for all his kindness. He seemed glad to see us, and was very friendly and courteous. Before the crisis of 1900 he was supposed to be strongly anti-foreign in his sympathies and policy, and he may have been so. The experiences of the year, however, were an eye-opener to him, as well as to many more, and we found him very obliging, and willing to further our interests in every possible way.

The Changsha Deed.—The Changsha Deed has a history, and a few words in regard to it may serve as an illustration of the change which had come over the official attitude in Hunan. It takes us back to the remarkable journey which was made by Mr. Sparham, Mr. Greig, and myself in Hunan, in April and May of 1889. On that journey we spent two days, April 27 and 28, at Changsha, receiving the officials and discussing various points of interest with them. The first point that came up was that of our admission into the city. They at once allowed our *right* to enter, but begged us not to press it, on account of the examinations that were going on at the time. The second point was that of procuring a house at Changsha for missionary purposes. Seeing that entering the city would amount to nothing more than being carried into it and out of it in a closed chair, and that in the dark, we came to the conclusion that it would be our wisest policy to give up the first point, if by so doing we could secure the second. So we told them that, though we were anxious to enter the

city, we would not press our right to do so if they would give us permission to purchase a house at Changsha, stamp the deed in the event of our finding a seller, and protect the mission when once established. The proposal was no sooner made than they jumped at it, thinking, no doubt, that any effort put forth by us to procure a house at Changsha would be labour lost. But, fortunately, we had found a man who was willing to sell, and he was in the boat at the time, listening to the conversation between the officials and ourselves. No sooner did they leave the boat than our friend expressed himself as perfectly satisfied and quite prepared to complete the bargain. The deed was written out there and then, and the earnest money paid. Having thus purchased the house, we sent word to the officials to inform them of the fact, and to request them to stamp the deed with the official seal according to promise. For this, however, they were not prepared. The fact is, they never expected us to succeed, and they never expected that their promise should be taken as serious by us. On the following morning we waited some hours to see if any action would be taken by them, but not a man among them came near us. The district magistrate sent his card, but would do nothing more. I sent my card to the military officer in charge of the city, and who on the previous day had professed great friendliness; but he went so far as to *return* my card, and thus add insult to injury. Later on, however, a messenger was sent by him to say that though nothing could be done at that time, the matter would be taken up and put through on our way back from Hengchow. Another *empty* promise, of course. On our way back we called at Changsha

again, and made another attempt to get the deed stamped. Mr. Peng took it to the Yamen and asked the magistrate kindly to fulfil his promise and stamp it with his official seal. The magistrate took the deed and kept it, telling Mr. Peng that he would return it after consulting the higher officials. This was on the 29th of May, 1899. Thus began a fight between ourselves and the Changsha officials over the precious bit of paper, which lasted nearly two years. The English Consuls at Hankow gave us every help in their power, but to no avail. The Changsha officials had made up their minds to keep us out of the city, and we had made up our minds to get in, and so the fight went on. They fought hard, and but for the troubles of 1900 would have succeeded in carrying on the fight for some years longer. The Hengchow riot, however, supplied us with the very leverage we needed in order to deal effectively with them and gain our point. It was a long fight and a hard one, but it ended in a great triumph for the missionary cause in Hunan. The deed was stamped in February, 1901, and sent to Mr. Peng, with the request that it might be respectfully forwarded to us. I received it on the 19th of March. The sight of this document, I need hardly say, made my heart glad. No foreigner had ever held property in Changsha till then. Even the Roman Catholics had not succeeded in gaining a footing in that famous city. We, however, did succeed, and that with the full cognisance and permission of the city officials, both higher and lower. It was about twenty years since I saw Changsha for the first time. During the whole of the intervening period it was one of my great ambitions to establish a mission at that splendid centre. For years there was

nothing in the outlook to inspire hope. At one time it looked hopeless. Thank God, it is now, and has been for some years, an accomplished fact.

My Eighth Visit to Hunan.—On this visit I was accompanied by Dr. Peake and Mr. and Mrs. Greig. The special object of this trip was to open the chapels that had been rebuilt at Hengchow and Hengshan, and to transfer the headquarters of the Mission from Yochow to Hengchow, the work having developed much more rapidly and extensively in and around the latter place. It had also become a perfectly safe place for residence, which was not the case when we started at Yochow. Soon after leaving Yochow I had a severe attack of dysentery, and was in pain and discomfort all the way. At one time I hardly expected to see Hankow again. But I was greatly cheered by what I saw. The chapel and houses put up by Mr. Peng astonished me. He had written me glowing accounts of them, but I was not at all prepared to see such fine buildings. The Sunday congregations were another surprise. The large chapel was simply crammed with converts and inquirers. We had fifty-three baptisms, and had to put off several of the candidates until another time. The officials and scholars vied with each other in showing us kindness. We were invited by the gentry and scholars to visit the famous Stone-drum College at Hengchow, from which Dr Wolfe, in 1897, was driven away, barely escaping with his life. I spent my seventieth birthday at Hengchow on this occasion, and the officials insisted on giving me a feast. I was not fit to go, but I thought it best to show my appreciation of their kindness, so I promised to come and sit with them, though I could eat nothing. The

Taotai, Si Tung, made a congratulatory speech on the occasion, and I tried to reply. It was a happy time, and had I been well I should have enjoyed it greatly. On leaving Hengchow we were loaded with presents of many kinds. On our way down the river we called at Hengshan and Siangtan, and opened the chapels at both places; but I was not fit for work, and could do little more than show my face and congratulate the brethren. We called at Changsha and held services there. When the Governor was told of my condition, he sent very kind messages, and wired to Yochow, ordering his steam launch to be held in readiness for me on my arrival, and take me to Hankow. This was a journey never to be forgotten. I never realised more vividly than I did on this journey that the Kingdom of God was in Hunan.

My Ninth Visit to Hunan.—My ninth visit was in May, 1902, accompanied by Mr. Sparham. Our object in going this time was to open the chapel at Changsha. The chapel was opened on June 1st. Mr. Sparham preached in the morning, and I in the afternoon. Representatives of all the missions were present. At the close of the afternoon service nine persons were baptised. This was, to both Mr. Sparham and myself, a day of unspeakable gladness. Many longings were gratified on that day, and many prayers answered. Changsha is the most important centre in Hunan, and one of the most beautiful cities in the Empire. For many years it was the heart of the anti-foreign and anti-Christian movement in Central China, whose influence was felt in every part of the eighteen provinces. To open this little sanctuary in *Changsha*—that *mysterious* Changsha, that bitterly *hostile* Changsha—was felt by us

both to be a privilege indeed. "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name." It was not difficult to join the Psalmist in so praising God on that day. We called at Siangtan on the same trip, and both Mr. Sparham and myself preached to large congregations of converts. At the close of the morning service seven adult believers were baptised.

My Tenth Visit to Hunan.—My tenth visit was in May, 1903, accompanied by Mr. Sparham. On this visit we called on the Governor, Chau Erh-Sun, and gave him a copy of our chapel rules, which we had just drawn up. On the following day the Governor returned the call, and said: "I have been reading your chapel rules, and I am exceedingly pleased with them. If these are your principles and practices, then multiply your chapels as fast as you can. The more the better, and the faster the better." Governor Chau is a very upright official, and one of the most pleasant men I have met in China. Unfortunately for Hunan he was soon recalled to the North, where he has been occupying some high and responsible posts. On this visit to Changsha, Chang King-Yün, a military official, gave us $200 towards the erection of a chapel in Siang-Hiang, his native city. We paid a visit to Siangtan on this occasion, and were glad to find the work there in a most flourishing condition. We had a congregation of about 150 believers in the morning, and there were baptised twenty-six in all. The congregations would have been larger but for the heavy rain, which kept many away.

My Eleventh and Last Visit to Hunan.—This was a trip taken with the deputation in 1904. Mr. Cousins, Mr. Bolton, Mr. Burnip, and myself left Hankow on

March 17th, and returned to Hankow on April 3rd. We travelled by water to Siangtan, and overland from Siangtan to Hengchow. It was with pride that I showed the deputation an *open* Hunan, and the great work that God was doing in Hunan. They could not realise the change fully, for they had only one side of the picture before them. I did what I could to enable them to form some idea of the other. It was a most delightful trip, and a most profitable one also.

The London Missionary Society's Sphere in Hunan.—One of the most important things done on this journey was to define the London Missionary Society's sphere in Hunan. We resolved to give up some of the stations occupied by us in favour of other missions, and to confine our efforts to Changsha, Siangtan, and Hengchow as head stations, and to the branch stations connected with them. We are now working in thirteen counties; and they supply us with a magnificent sphere, stretching from the Tung-Ting Lake to Lei-Yang in the Hengchow prefecture, and more than 250 miles in extent. These thirteen counties have an area of about 13,000 square miles, and a population of not less than 4,000,000. This is a noble sphere, but, I am sorry to say, wretchedly manned. At Hengchow we have only two missionaries, at Siangtan only one, and at Changsha only one, whilst we ought to have three or four at Hengchow, and two at least at each of the other places. "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few. Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that He send forth labourers into His harvest."

Other Societies in Hunan.—It is a great joy to me to notice with what enthusiasm Hunan has been taken up

by other societies, English, American, and Continental. The American Presbyterian Mission, the American Reformed Church, the American Episcopal Church, the Wesleyan Missionary Society, the Christian Missionary Alliance, the American United Evangelical Mission, the Cumberland Mission, the Yale Mission, the Norwegian Mission, and other missions, are now working there. There are at present fifteen missions in Hunan, represented by about one hundred and fifty missionaries, including wives. This is a wonderful development, and I cannot think of it without praising God for the great things He has done.

Mr. Peng Lan-Seng.—I must not close without telling you something about Mr. Peng Lan-Seng, to whom the development of the work in the Siang Valley is very largely due. Before his conversion, in 1892, Mr. Peng was not only a heathen, but, like most of his fellow provincials, bitterly anti-foreign and anti-Christian. He thoroughly believed in the evil powers of Christianity, and had a wholesome dread of entering a missionary's house or chapel, lest he might be turned into a "*foreign devil.*" The missionary's tea and cake he regarded as poison, and he dared not touch either. He was a strong believer in the old Hunan story about the inhumanity of the foreigner and the bestiality of the foreign religion. He was also a notoriously bad man. He is never weary of telling people the story of his conversion; and when he does so, he never fails to remind his hearers that of all the sinners in China he is the chief. Many years ago Mr. Teng, a native of Changsha, and the publisher of Chou Han's books, was in my study. Among other things he told me this

interesting story: "I want to tell you," said he, "what has brought me to Hankow. I have come to see what it is that has worked such a change in Peng Lan-Seng. He is a native of Changsha, and an old comrade of mine. He used to be the worst man in Changsha, but he has given up all his bad habits, and he is now a new man. When I ask him the reason for this great change, he tells me that it is the Gospel that has done it; and I have come down in order to find out the truth about this matter." When, in 1892, Mr. Peng presented himself as a candidate, we all—the native evangelists and the foreign missionaries—stood in great doubt of the man. Many rumours reached us about his past life which made us hesitate to admit him into our communion. He waited, and waited long. When at last he was admitted, some of us had grave doubts as to the wisdom of the step. Some were strongly in favour of prolonging the time of probation.

No sooner was Mr. Peng admitted than he began to work for Christ. He was ever to be found at the Kia-Kiai chapel, preaching with all his might. Some of us felt that it was somewhat early for him to begin to exercise his gifts in this particular way, and that it would be well to put a stop to his preaching. But Mr. Peng was irrepressible. Preach he must, and preach he would. Very soon the salvation of Hunan became the centre of his thoughts. He began by working for the Hunanese in and around Hankow. His prayers on behalf of Hunan in those days were something indescribable. They were impassioned pleadings with God on behalf of his own people—his kindred according to the flesh. None who were present can forget his prayer at our

united meetings at the beginning of 1894. He was then a Christian of only two years' standing, but he offered up a prayer which moved the hearts of all present. At the close, one of the missionaries present turned to me and said, "Who is that brother? That prayer was the most remarkable thing of the meeting." And that was true, though the whole meeting was a remarkably good one. The form which his prayers took was often quaint, but his earnestness carried everything before it. I remember distinctly his prayer at our united meetings in the first week of 1895, when he poured out his soul in this strain: "O Lord, Thou knowest that Hunan means South of the Lake, and Hupeh North of the Lake. The lake is called the Tung-ting. Thou knowest, Lord, that there are more people in these two provinces than there are fish in that lake. And Thou hath sent us to be fishers of men. But in many places the Gospel net has not been let down, and there are no means of catching the fish, neither are there any fishermen. Especially is this the case in Hunan. We earnestly pray Thee, O Lord, that in every place there may be a Gospel net and a skilful fisherman." The whole prayer was a wonderful outpouring of the soul before God. Some of us can never forget it. He is a strong believer in prayer. A gentleman at Hankow invited Mr. Peng, Mr. Sparham, and myself to feast. There were several others there, and among them a nephew of the Viceroy, Chang Chih-tung. Mr. Peng gave them the story of his conversion and subsequent trials. It was most graphically told. "I tell you what it is," he said in conclusion, "if a man wants to be a genuine Christian, he must *pray*, and he must pray till the tears

flow from his eyes and the perspiration runs down his back. That has been my experience." For some time Mr. Peng devoted himself to the evangelisation of his Hunanese countrymen as a voluntary worker. In 1895 he was asked to become a colporteur in Hunan, and amidst many perils he and his colleagues were greatly blessed. He was ultimately taken on by the Society as an evangelist, and in that capacity he is working still. He is a man of tremendous energy, very resourceful, and very versatile. He is highly respected by the officials and trusted by the people. The work of the London Missionary Society in Hunan owes him much. Indeed, I do not see how we could have got along at all without Peng Lan-Seng.

I have tried to give you a brief outline of the history of the Gospel in Hupeh and Hunan, and you will have no difficulty in drawing your own conclusions. Compare the state of things to-day with the state of things in 1861, when I arrived at Hankow, and compare the state of things to-day with the state of things in 1880, when I first visited Hunan, and you will come to the conclusion, I think, that the Gospel in China is the power of God unto the salvation of men. I think you will come to the conclusion that Jesus is Lord, and that he is *actually* leading the Chinese back to God the Father. I think you will come to the conclusion that the great need of China to-day is Jesus Christ, and that the progress of that great people is bound up with the progress of His Kingdom. Some time ago I read in one of your religious periodicals a statement to the effect that "*Congregationalism is a Christless Church.*" That is a statement which I do not believe. I read it in China, I did not

believe it then; and I do not believe it now. I would, however, remind you that it is a matter of vital importance to the Congregational Churches at home, and their missions abroad, whether Congregationalism is a Christless Church or not. A Christless Church cannot be a living Church; a Christless Church cannot be a spiritual Church; a Christless Church cannot be an aggressive Church; a Christless Church cannot be a missionary Church. Missionary enthusiasm is impossible without firm conviction with regard to the Divinity of Christ's person and an undying attachment to Him as Saviour and Lord. The progress of Christ's Kingdom must ever depend on the place which Christ Himself occupies in the devotion, the adoration, and the affection of the Church. Once lose hold of the *Divine* Christ, and cease to preach Him as the *one* Saviour of men, and you may shut up your churches, and write "Ichabod" over your mission houses. Your missions will die down, and before the close of the twentieth century your mission houses will have perished from the earth. We must cling to the God-man, and to Christianity as the *absolute* and *final* religion, if we would go on with the missionary work. If Jesus is not all in all to us, if He has not become Lord and God to us, it is certain we shall find it impossible to make great sacrifices for Him, we shall not go forth and fight His battles, we shall not suffer and die for the honour of His name. To the apostles Jesus was the *one* Lord and Saviour; and hence their missionary enthusiasm and marvellous success. To the early Church the name of Jesus was above every name; and hence its burning zeal and self-propagating power. To the fathers and founders of the London Missionary Society

Jesus was not a myth, but a glorious reality, the brightest of all realities; and hence their magnificent courage and boundless hope. To the heroes of the mission field, whether ancient or modern, Jesus has not been as one *among* the many, but the *One;* and hence their all-conquering faith and splendid devotion. From first to last, they have known no other name than the name of Jesus; and they have had but one passion, and that is *He*. Let the Church of to-day be loyal to Christ, and the result will be universal triumph. Everywhere, under the influence of His all-pervading presence, "The old order changeth, yielding place to new," and there are many indications to-day that the coming of Christ in full power, to reign over all, is not a far distant event. May that blessed day soon dawn, and

> "His name shall endure for ever,
> His name shall be continued as long as the sun;
> And men shall be blessed in Him;
> All nations shall call Him blessed."

XII

FEAR NOT

"And his servant said unto him, Alas, my master! how shall we do? And he answered, Fear not; for they that be with us are more than they that be with them."—2 KINGS vi. 15, 16.

"THE king of Syria warred against Israel." This seems to have been a sort of guerilla warfare, carried on by predatory inroads on different parts of the country.

These incursions of the Syrians were closely watched by Elisha and foiled by him once and again. On this occasion the Syrian king suspected some of his servants of carrying on a treacherous correspondence with the enemy, and he was sore troubled on this account. He called his servants together and said unto them, Will ye not show me which of us is for the king of Israel? When informed about Elisha he determined forthwith to apprehend him. So a Syrian detachment was sent to Dothan, a small city about twelve miles to the north of Samaria. When the servant of Elisha went forth early in the morning he beheld a sight which paralysed him with fear. There was the city, and round about it was a host with horses and chariots. In wildest alarm he

hurries back to his master, and says, "Alas, my master! how shall we do?" And Elisha answered and said, "Fear not; for they that be with us are more than they that be with them."

Here we have a wonderful instance of mental calmness and fearlessness in the midst of very trying circumstances. Let us consider for a few minutes the secret of Elisha's sublime fortitude on this ever-memorable occasion.

I would mention, first, his *faith in God.* "They that be with us are more than they that be with them." It was not confidence in self. They are more than we—more in number and more in strength. What could this one man do against that great host? It was not confidence in any arm of flesh. There is no help from without. The servant was terrified; the city was in a defenceless state. What could this unarmed, defenceless man do against that well-equipped multitude? What made the prophet so calm and so fearless in the midst of circumstances so alarming? What was the secret of his strength? *Implicit faith in God.* That was one secret. His faith in God's presence and in the sufficiency of this presence was implicit. Elisha believed in God. He believed in God's power and faithfulness. He believed in God's almightiness, and he believed that God's almightiness was on his side. It was not a theoretical trust in God, based upon a traditional creed, but a practical resting of the soul on God, induced by a conscious experience of God's faithfulness, and a deep

insight into God's ways. This faith is not a something that can be got up at a moment's notice. The life of Elisha was a life of faith in the living God. He could say at all times and in all circumstances, God is with me, and God being with me, whom shall I fear?

Let us look at faith in its relation to the use of means. Shall we draw the conclusion from this narrative that the *highest* faith in God rejects the use of means? Does belief in the use of means indicate a *lower* faith? My reply is *No, emphatically no!* There are times when means are beyond my reach, as was the case with Elisha at Dothan, and the only thing I can do is simply to cast myself upon God, as Elisha did. There are times when means are within my reach, and when such is the case it is God's will that I should use them. It would be tempting God not to do so.

Look at Moses at the Red Sea, and the same Moses at Rephidim. In the one case means were beyond his reach, and all that he could do in the circumstances was to look up to God. And Moses said unto the people: "Fear not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord." In the other case means were within his reach and his command to Joshua was: "Choose us out men, and go out, fight with Amalek." Was Moses at Rephidim less a man of God, less a man of faith, than he was at the Red Sea?

Let us look at this question in its bearing on the missionary enterprise. What is the Divine plan with regard to the conversion of the world? Is the work to

be done with or without the use of means? A ministers' meeting was held at Northampton in the year 1786. When the public services were ended, Mr. Ryland, senior, entered the room and demanded that two junior ministers, Mr. Carey and his friend, should each propose a question for general discussion. Mr. Carey pleaded several excuses; but a question was imperiously demanded. At length Mr. Carey submitted this question: whether the command given to the apostles *to teach all nations* was not obligatory on all succeeding ministers to the end of the world, seeing that the accompanying promise was of equal extent. Mr. Carey was told by Mr. Ryland, without waiting for the judgment of the company present, that certainly nothing could be done before another Pentecost, when the effusion of miraculous gifts, including the gift of tongues, would give effect to the commission of Christ as at first, and that he was a miserable enthusiast for asking such a question as that.

Now, both these men were men of God, men of prayer, and men of faith. But which of them exhibited the higher faith? There can be no doubt as to the right answer to this question. Had the faith of Ryland ruled in the Baptist Body at that time, what would have become of Carey, the father of the modern mission? And had the faith of Ryland been the ruling faith of the Christian Church during the past century, where would have been the modern mission to-day? Carey believed in God, but in God as working in and through means; and hence the establishment of the Baptist Mission at

that time, and hence also the daring and fortitude of Carey himself. The rejection of means may indicate a lower faith, it may spring from the want of faith. "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe." The faith that lives on the extraordinary and the marvellous must necessarily be a weak and unstable faith. The faith that can see more of God in the manna and the quails than in the grand provision in Nature by which God feeds sixteen hundred millions of human beings every day, is a very infantile faith. The faith that can see more of God in the few instances of what people call faith-healing than in the numberless cases of healing God is effecting every day through the agency of natural means, cannot be looked upon as a very enlightened faith. As in the physical realm, so in the spiritual, the use of means is of Divine ordination. What we need as we are entering on this new century is *implicit* faith in God, not as a God working independently of means, but as a God working in and through means. And one of the first duties of the missionary societies is to perfect their agencies and bring them up to the requirements of the times and of the age. This faith would secure all the men and the money required to carry on the missionary enterprise with unflagging energy and signal success.

Speaking of China, I do not hesitate to say that our great need is more of everything and greater efficiency in everything. We do not want fewer workers, but more workers and better work. We do not want fewer chapels,

but more chapels and better preaching. We do not want fewer hospitals, but more hospitals and better doctoring. We do not want fewer schools, but more schools and better teaching. We do not want fewer books, but more books and better writing. We do not want fewer asylums, but more asylums and more of the spirit of Christ in the management of them. We want more of everything, and we want to carry everything to the highest pitch of perfection.

And this faith in God, as working in and through means, is one of the greatest needs of the Church everywhere, the world all over. We need the faith that will compel us to give to God our very best of everything, to be used by Him in the way that seemeth best in His sight.

This implicit faith in God is indispensable to every Christian worker; emphatically it is so to every Christian missionary. There never was a great worker for God, there never was a great missionary, who did not possess it in an eminent degree. It was one of the grand secrets of Elisha's power.

Spiritual Vision.—That was another secret of Elisha's sublime fortitude in the midst of those trying circumstances, "Elisha prayed and said, Lord, I pray Thee, open his eyes that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man, and the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha." The prophet lived in two realms, the physical and the spiritual, and the latter was as real to him as the former,

nay, it was more so. He was at this time placed in the midst of two sets of realities, and both were naked and open to his sight—the one to his physical sight, and the other to his spiritual sight. He saw with the eye of sense, and he saw with the eye of the spirit. What mysterious powers of seeing there are in man! Look at the case before us. Where the servant saw nothing, the prophet was beholding a vision of angels. And yet the servant had this power of seeing. "Lord, open his eyes that he may see, and the Lord opened the eyes of the young man." The power was there, but lying dormant. It only required to be roused into action.

There is often a great contrast between these two visions. In the case before us the contrast was very striking. The physical was all *against* the prophet, but the spiritual was all *for* him. And so it is often in life. Where all is vacancy and darkness to the physical eye everything is clear and bright to the spiritual eye.

A man's fortitude in danger will greatly depend on the clearness of his spiritual vision. The prophet's servant was paralysed with fear because his eyes were closed; the prophet was calm and triumphant because his eyes were open.

A man's hopefulness in the midst of adverse appearances will greatly depend on the clearness of his spiritual vision. The prophets of old were richly endowed with this power of seeing, and hence their great hopefulness. Appearances were often wholly against them, and their environments were sometimes most depressing. But

they had this wonderful power of seeing, and their hearts were ever strong. They had the power of rising above their surroundings, soaring aloft, and reaching an altitude from which they could clearly see the glories of the new age. This it was that enabled them to face the evils of their own times and never despair. Their denunciations were often most severe, and their threatenings were sometimes terrific; but they never lost their faith in God and in His redemptive purposes. The present might be dark, but the morn would dawn. To their prophetic eye the new age was a bright reality. They had wonderful visions of the glories of that age. They saw a world covered with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. They saw God as King sitting on His Throne, high and lifted up, and wielding the sceptre of universal dominion. Under the Divine rule they saw the tree yielding its fruit, and the earth yielding her increase. There is peace and plenty everywhere. Grinding poverty and helpless want are things of the past. Basking in the sunshine of God's face, the people are happy and prosperous. Under the care and guidance of the Great Shepherd, there is universal rest, deep joy, and gladness unspeakable. It is wonderful how clear all this was to the vision of the prophets and seers of old. They saw it all, they felt it all; and so real and vivid was it all to them that they often spoke of it, not as a something that was to take place in the distant future, but as actually realised in their own times. They spoke of

it as men actually living and moving in the midst of the coming glory.

Is this spiritual vision possible to us. Yes, thank God, it is possible to us also. The power of seeing God, of realising the presence of God, of receiving manifestations and assurances from God, is possible to us. Everything depends on the closeness of our walk with God in our daily life, on our identification with God in His purposes of redemption and grace, and on the sincerity and completeness of our consecration to His service. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall *see* God." "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him, and He will show them His covenant."

This gift of spiritual vision is a gift of unspeakable value to every one who may be trying to serve God in the midst of opposition, discouragements, and trials of various kinds, and therefore a gift which every Christian worker, and especially every Christian missionary, should earnestly covet. It was one of the grand secrets of Elisha's power.

There was another secret, namely, a sense of the Divine care and protection. "And the mountain was full of chariots of fire round about Elisha." And what did all this mean to the prophet? It meant this—it meant that he was surrounded by God's omnipotence; it meant that God was with him and for him. It makes a great difference to a man whether he has, or has not, this sense of the Divine presence and care. The servant was really as safe as his master; but he did not know it,

and hence the anxiety and alarm which filled his breast. The Master knew it, and hence his calmness and strength. The prophet knew God, and he knew that that spiritual host had come to protect him. God was no stranger to the prophet, and God's ways were not unknown to him. Had there been no such vision vouchsafed to the prophet as is here recorded, he would have been calm and strong. Elisha so lived *with* God and *for* God, as to have always the assurance that the everlasting arms were round about him.

And this blessed assurance may be *ours*, and *always* ours. It may be ours in life, and it may be ours in death. It is this assurance that enables the Christian missionary to face the trials of the missionary life with calmness; and it is this assurance that enables the Christian martyr to face death in its most cruel forms with Divine fortitude. Think you that our martyred brothers and sisters in China, in the year 1900, had not this assurance in the hour of trial? Think you that the everlasting arms were not round about them all the time? Think you that no vision of angels was vouchsafed to them in the last hour? "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" So spake the Great Redeemer; but it is not the will of the Father that any of His redeemed ones should so speak.

If we know God, if we know that God is ours and that we are His, then we ought to know that there is nothing in the universe that can really injure us, that can touch our highest interests. The man who has this assurance,

and who lives in the conscious possession of this assurance, cannot but be calm, and strong, and trusting in the most trying circumstances. In the fiercest storm he can say, and truly say:—

> "Nothing that mine eyes can see,
> Shall disturb my faith in Thee."

"The Lord is my salvation; whom shall I fear."

The fourth secret, and the last that I shall mention on this occasion, was Elisha's power in prayer. Elisha was a man of prayer. He was mighty in prayer. "Lord, I pray Thee, open his eyes," and the Lord opened the eyes of the young man. "Lord, smite the people with blindness," and He smote them with blindness, according to the words of Elisha. The prophet prayed as one who knew the mind of God, and as one who was able to command the Divine resources. He knew what to ask from God, and when to ask. The secret of the Lord was with him. With Elisha prayer was not a something got up for the occasion. It was the atmosphere in which he lived and moved; and hence his power with God on this special occasion, and hence his sublime fortitude also. The man who knows that Omnipotence is on his side, and who feels that he can at any moment go to God and hold face to face communion with Him, cannot be a coward. He is strong in God's strength; he is mighty in God's might.

This power in prayer is one of the greatest needs of the Christian Church to-day. "The evangelisation of

the world in this generation," says Mr. Robert Speer, in his pamphlet on prayer and missions, "depends, first of all, upon a revival of prayer. Deeper than the need for men, deeper than the need for money: aye, deep down at the bottom of our spiritual life, is the need for the forgotten secret of prevailing world-wide prayer."

"If," said John Forster many years ago, "the whole, or the greater number of the disciples of Christianity were, with an earnest unfailing resolution of each, to combine that heaven should not withhold one single influence which the very utmost effort of conspiring and preserving supplication could obtain, it would be a sign of the revolution of the world being at hand."

These words are true, solemnly true. Do we desire to see the world evangelised before the close of this century? Do we desire to see China, Japan, Korea, and all the Far East evangelised before the close of this century? If we do, we must all live nearer to God, and pray as we have never prayed before for the salvation of men. The Church of God throughout the whole world must go on her knees, and there abide until the work is done. Our prayers must be united, earnest, believing, importunate. They must spring from a profound sense of a great want, and an unwavering assurance of the availableness and adequacy of the Holy Spirit to meet it. We believe in means, and we do well to believe in means, but let us never forget that the great *Doer* is God. "Prayers and pains, through

faith," said John Elliot, the Apostle of the Indians, "will do anything." "Not by might, nor by power, but by My spirit, saith the Lord."

So much for the secret of Elisha's sublime fortitude and power. His faith in God was implicit, his spiritual vision was clear, his sense of the Divine protection was intensely real, and his power in prayer was mighty. Why should this secret not be ours? And possessing this secret, why should we ever feel discouraged in the presence of dangers, difficulties, and adverse appearances?

"Fear not; for they that be with us are more than they that be with them."

Let me now call your attention to two or three practical applications of these words.

And, first, apply them to the struggle that is going on between good and evil in our hearts. How fierce the struggle! How protracted! How desperate often! I have my ideal of what I ought to be. Shall I ever realise my ideal? Shall I ever attain to true manhood? Is the Christ-like life possible to me? To me who would do good, evil is ever present. "O wretched man that I am!" Had I not better give up the battle as hopeless? "Alas, my master! how shall we do?" "Fear not." God is on the side of the good in every one of us. Fight on! Struggle on! The victory is certain.

Apply them to the trials of life. How often are we called upon to pass through violent storms and thick darkness on our journey through life! Sometimes everything seems to be against us, and there are times

when we feel as if we could give up all hope. "Alas, my Master! how shall we do?" "Fear not." God is with us, and if God is with us and for us, who can be against us. He will cause all things to work together for good to them that love Him.

Apply them to the struggle that is going on in the world between truth and error, faith and unbelief, religion and superstition, Christianity and paganism. Consider one fact. We are told that the heathen population of the world to-day is about 840 millions, and that against these 840 millions of pagans there are in the whole heathen world only about three millions of Christian converts. "Alas, my Master! how shall we do?" What can we do against that great host? Had we not better give up the work as hopeless? That is the language of sight.

"Fear not, for they that be with us are more than they that be with them." That is the language of faith. God is on the side of truth against error, of religion against superstition, of Christianity against paganism. If God is for, who can be against? And if God is against, who can be for?

Apply them to the struggle that is going on between good and evil in the world. Think for a moment of the evils that still reign among men. Their name is legion. Think of the drinking evil, the gambling evil, the social evil, the opium evil, militarism, despotism, and many other forms of evil that might be mentioned. How are all these evils to be done away with? Will the day ever

come when they shall be done away with? "Alas, my Master! how shall we do?" What can we do? What is the use of trying to do anything? That is the language of sight. "Fear not, for they that be with us are more than they that be with them." That is the language of faith. God is against all these forms of evil, and they must perish. The Spirit of God is in the world, fighting against every form of evil, and He will not rest till every form is brought under and cast out. It is a great joy to see men take a stand against the sins and the evils of their times; but the great fact on which we build our hope is the everlasting, unchanging, and unchangeable attitude of God against all sin and all evil.

On July 21st, 1901, just six years ago, I preached a sermon at Kuling, China, in which I gave an expression to my hopes with regard to the new century on which we were then entering. Perhaps I may be permitted to repeat one or two of the remarks which I made on that occasion. I said:

"God, I verily believe, is going to visit His people, and dwell among them. God is going to bless His Church, and, as a result, the whole world shall know His salvation. 'God shall bless *us*, and all the ends of the earth shall fear Him.' Let us begin the new century believing that God *can* do this, and that He *will* do this. Why should we doubt? Why should not this come to pass before the close of the twentieth century? Look at the nineteenth century. Think of its wonderful achievements. Compare the Europe of to-day with the Europe of a hundred years

ago. Compare the England of to-day with the England of a hundred years ago. What a wonderful change for the better has taken place. The improvements politically, socially, morally, and religiously have been marvellous. Look at the inventions of the century. Think of the progress of science, and the application of science to practical life. Then look at the century from a missionary point of view. The nineteenth century will always be known as the great missionary century to the end of time. Nearly all the missionary societies were born in the nineteenth century. The few that were started at the close of the eighteenth century were struggling for existence at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Now the world is covered with Christian missions, and everywhere the blessing of God is resting upon them.

"Then look at the condition of the heathen world then and now. Look at the South Seas, Madagascar, Africa, India, Japan, China. Even China stands on a much higher plane than she did at the beginning of the last century. One hundred years ago the Chinese were fast asleep; to-day the tendency to wake up is to be seen in every direction, and the signs of life and progress are unmistakable among all classes. The progress in Japan during the past forty years is one of the great marvels of our times. In every land there has been progress, and very great progress in some.

"I believe the new century is coming to us laden with richest blessings—blessings to the Church, and blessings

to the world. There will be great out-pourings of God's spirit, and great revivals of religion will follow. Before the close of the century all nations will have been made acquainted with the truth as it is in Jesus; idolatry will have passed away, slavery will have been abolished the world all over, and war will have become an impossible barbarism. The day is coming, and it is not far off, when the nations will cease to submit their differences to the arbitrament of the sword. Think you that such wars and barbarities as have disfigured the past will be possible a hundred years hence? I do not. They will be impossible. Again, many of the vices that prevail now, both in civilised and uncivilised lands, will have ceased to be. Moreover, many a social problem will have been solved, and the conditions of living will be vastly improved.

"Let the progress of this century be as great in proportion to its advantages as that of the past century, and the kingdoms of the world will have become the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ before its close. Earth's long night will have passed away, and earth's weeping will have been turned into a song.

> "'Thy long night is ending of sorrow and wrong,
> For shame there is glory, for weeping a song.
> The new moon is dawning, burst forth the new sun,
> The new verdure is smiling, the new age is begun.'

"Let us begin the new century with this great hope filling our hearts. The past century in China was a

century of sowing; this will be a century of reaping. That was a century of pulling down; this will be a century of building up. Let us thank God that we are permitted to begin the new century in China with prospects so bright. We have been passing through terrible experiences; and we owe it to God's great mercy that we and our work have not been consumed by the insatiable wrath of the enemy. I believe that all that has transpired will be made conducive to the furtherance of Christ's kingdom in China. I believe that there is to be a new China, and I believe also that the agonies through which China has been passing of late are mere throes preceding the new birth. In the years to come, we shall look back on the year 1900 as the blackest and most terrible in the history of the Christian church in China; and we shall look back on it, too, as the most pregnant with blessing."

Such are some of the words spoken by me at Kuling, in 1901, soon after the suppression of the Boxer movement. They were spoken in the presence of hundreds of my fellow missionaries; and they were at the time an honest expression of my hopes with regard to the new century on which we were then entering. Much has taken place since to strengthen these hopes. The great revival in Wales, with its far-reaching influence, and the wonderful educational development and other developments in China, have taken place since. If I believed then, how can I doubt now? So far as China is concerned, I can safely say that the outlook is not only

encouraging, but truly inspiring. Our prospects there are brighter to-day than they have ever been before. The Chinese are waking up from the sleep of centuries. The whole Empire is open to the missionary; and the mind of the nation is open to the Gospel. Up to the first year of this century Hunan was closed to the Gospel as no other province was. It was the most anti-foreign and anti-Christian of all the provinces; now Hunan is open from end to end, and its twenty millions of people are among the most wide-awake and progressive in the Empire. When I think of the great change in Hunan, and indeed in all China, and when I think of the wonderful movement towards Christianity which is now to be witnessed in so many parts of the land, my heart is filled with reverential wonder and deepest gratitude. "This is the Lord's doing, and is marvellous in our eyes."

Having witnessed such wonderful manifestations of God's power in China, how is it possible for me to feel discouraged? I do not feel discouraged. I *cannot* feel discouraged. My faith in God and in His redemptive purposes was never stronger than it is now, and this is to be ascribed to a great extent to what I have seen of His saving power in the land of Sinim.

We cannot unravel the future and learn what is mingled in its web, but we know that China can never return to her former state of isolation and seclusion. Never more can that Empire, like a great world within itself, stand alone and apart from the rest of the globe.

China has entered into the great family of nations, never to be turned out. As a member of the family shall she be a curse or a blessing? Much will depend on the Christian Church. Let the Church do her duty, and China will be a blessing. Let the Church neglect her duty, and China may become a curse. I believe in the solidarity of the race. England cannot be all right, whilst China is all wrong. The people of England cannot be fully blessed whilst the Chinese remain altogether unblessed. As long as one corner of the globe remains pagan and unevangelised, we must all suffer. We are one body, and if one member suffer all the members suffer with it.

Has there ever been such an open door of opportunity set before the Christian Church as is to be seen to-day in China? China open! China awake! China's millions waiting to be evangelised. What a sight! Oh that God would open the eyes of His people that they might see! Oh that God would awaken the Churches to a sense of their opportunity, duty, and responsibility!

May our faith in God and His Word of promise be stronger than ever; may our spiritual vision be clearer than ever; may our sense of the Divine presence be a source of constant strength to us, and may our power in prayer grow day by day. Having put our hands to the great work of Christianising the nations, of bringing China and all lands to God, let us never look back. Let us shirk no duty, let us fear no foe, let us march on to

victory and to glory. Let our watchword be, Forward! And let our ambition be the bringing of the world to Christ.

"Christ for the world we sing!
The world to Christ we bring,
With one accord!
With us the work to share,
With us reproach to dare,
With us the Cross to bear
For Christ our Lord."

THE END.

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